Drops of Nectar

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

on

Shantideva's Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas

Volume Two

Version: July 2004

Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

according to the tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche

Commentary by Khenpo Kunpal Chapter Two

With Oral Explanations by Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga

Volume Two

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The translator is happy to receive corrections and revisions from other translators, editors and readers. Up-to-date editions of these texts will be placed every six months or so at:

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Dedicated to the unceasing activities of
Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche

Contents

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Andreas Kretschmar

Kathmandu, Nepal

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Remarks About the Transliteration

Remarks About the Transliteration of the Tibetan Text

The Tibetan root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, *spyod ′jug rtsa ba*, was established with the help of the Peking Tangyur edition (P), the Derge Tangyur edition (D), and two modern computer generated editions, one printed by Sichuan People's Publishing House (S) and one printed by Dharma Publishing (Y).[1]

> *spyod ′jug rtsa ba (Peking edition)*: byang chub sems dpa′i spyod pa la ′jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Peking Tangyur No. 5272, Vol. 99, pages 243.1.1-262.2.7, folio 1-45a7, mDo ′grel (dbu ma) XXVI, La. This Peking edition of the Kangyur and Tangyur was begun in 1737 under the Qianlong emperor, reprinted and catalogued between 1955 and 1961, and published as *The Tibetan Tripitaka*. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'P'.
>
> *spyod ′jug rtsa ba (Derge edition)*: byang chub sems dpa′i spyod pa la ′jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Derge Tangyur, mDo ′grel (dbu ma), La. The printing of the Derge Kangyur was begun under Situ Chökyi Jungne[2] and the King of Derge, Tenpa Tsering,[3] in 1733. The Derge Tangyur was printed between 1737-1744. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'D'.
>
> *spyod ′jug rtsa ba (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa′i spyod pa la ′jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche, 1982, pages 1-134. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'S'
>
> *spyod ′jug rtsa ba (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa′i spyod pa la ′jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 95 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'Y'.

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[1] The most recently published *bka′ bstan dpe bsdur ma edition* has not yet been integrated into this edition of the Tibetan root text. See *spyod ′jug rtsa ba (bsdur ma edition)* (PD), krung go′i bod kyi shes rig zhib ′jug lte gnas kyi bka′ bstan dpe sdur khang gis dpe bsdur zhus, published by krung go′i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, bstan ′gyur Vol. 61, pages 951-1048, dBu ma, La. This edition contains different readings from four Tangyur editions, namely Derge (D) [sde dge], Peking (P) [pe cin], Narthang (N) [snar thang] and Cone (C) [co ne].

[2] si tu chos kyi ′byung gnas (1699-1774).

[3] sde dge′i chos rgyal bstan pa tshe ring

We were further able to get hold of four Tibetan editions of Khenpo Kunpal's texts. Among these four texts, the edition of the Zhechen Monastery, probably printed in the forties or early fifties of the 20th century in East Tibet, is the oldest:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (zhe chen edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, originally printed in Zhechen Monastery, East Tibet, off-set reprint of the Zhechen woodblock print [zhe chen spar ma], 371 folios, published by Lama Ngödrup for Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'A'.

We further used a modern reprint of the zhe chen edition, computer generated and published through Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, pages 137-817. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'B'.

This edition must be treated with caution by any user. The editors have added titles in bold typeface to the sub-sections of the text. If one is not familiar with the original zhe chen edition, it is difficult to distinguish which titles were written by Khenpo Kunpal and which were added by the editors.

Tarthang Tulku published in the late nineties of the 20th century a computer generated reprint of the zhe chen edition:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 512 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'C'.

We based our transliteration of the Tibetan text mainly on the zhe chen edition of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary and have given variations in spelling and words in the footnotes, consulting the other two editions, following Wylie's transliteration system.

The fourth text, printed by Sangye Tendzin, 1963, in Nepal, proved not to be of any help for the transliteration of the zhe chen edition. This text seems to be a complete rephrasing of Khenpo Kunpal's text. A careful comparison has shown that almost every sentence has been rewritten. Sangye Tendzin himself studied in Zhechen Monastery as a young man. If he had gotten hold of an entirely different version of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, we can presume that he would have stated so in his colophon. It is more likely that he himself rewrote the commentary, which accounts for

the fact that present day khenpos do not consider this edition as being reliable. Still, Sangye Tendzin's edition is helpful to translators since it often gives different readings and interpretations of the text:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, woodblock print by sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin, in 1963 (16th rab byung chu mo yos kyi lo), Nepal, 345 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'T'.

Śāntideva's root text / chapter two

Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Chapter Two

Confessing Negativity

Tibetan and English

[1] rin-chen-sems de gzung-bar-bya-ba'i phyir /
de-bzhin-gshegs-pa rnams dang dam-pa'i-chos /
dkon-mchog dri-ma-med dang sangs-rgyas-sras /
yon-tan rgya-mtsho rnams la legs-par mchod /

[2] me-tog 'bras-bu ji-snyed yod-pa dang /
sman-gyi-rnam-pa gang-dag yod-pa dang /
'jig-rten rin-chen ji-snyed yod-pa dang /
chu-gtsang yid-du-'ong-ba ci-yod dang /

[3] rin-chen ri-bo dang ni de-bzhin-du /
nags-tshal sa-phyogs dben zhing nyams-dga' dang /
ljon-shing me-tog rgyan-spras spud-pa dang /
shing gang 'bras-bzang yal-ga dud-pa dang /

[4] lha sogs-'jig-rten na yang dri dang ni
spos dang dpag-bsam-shing dang rin-chen-shing /
ma-rmos-'khrungs pa'i-lo-tog rnam-pa dang /
gzhan-yang mchod-par-'os-pa'i rgyan rnams ni /

[5] mtsho dang rdzing-bu pad-mas brgyan-pa dag /
ngang-pa shin-tu skad-snyan yid-'ong ldan /
nam-mkha' rab-'byams khams kyi mthas-gtugs-pa /
yongs-su-bzung-ba-med-pa de-dag kun /

[6] blo-yis-blangs nas thub-pa skyes-kyi-mchog /
sras dang-bcas-pa rnams la legs 'bul na /
yon-gnas dam-pa thugs-rje-che-rnams kyis /
bdag la brtser-dgongs bdag gi 'di-dag bzhes /

[7] bdag ni bsod-nams mi ldan bkren chen te /
mchod-pa'i nor-gzhan bdag la cang-ma-mchis /
des-na gzhan-don dgongs-pa'i mgon gyis 'di /
bdag gi don slad nyid kyi mthus bzhes shig /

[8] rgyal dang de sras rnams la bdag gis ni /
bdag gi lus kun gtan-tu dbul-bar-bgyi /
sems-dpa'-mchog rnams bdag ni yongs bzhes shig /
gus-pas khyed kyi 'bangs-su-mchi-bar-bgyi /

[1] In order to adopt this precious bodhicitta,
(I) present offerings in an excellent way to the tathāgatas,
To the sublime dharma, the immaculate jewel,
And to the sons of the buddhas, who are an ocean of qualities.

[2] Whatever flowers and fruits there are
And whatever kinds of medicine,
Whatever jewels exist in this world
And whatever clean and pleasing waters there are;

[3] Jewel mountains and likewise
Forests, remote and joyful places,
Heavenly trees ornamented and bedecked with flowers
As well as trees (laden with) beautiful fruits, bending down the branches;

[4] Fragrances in the realms of gods and the like,
Incense, wish-granting trees and jewel trees,
Untilled and naturally grown crops,
And furthermore, ornaments that are worthy to be offered;

[5] Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses,
Wild geese, endowed with most beautiful voices,
All these, which do not belong to an owner,
Within the reaches of infinite space;

[6] Creating these in my mind, I offer them in an excellent way
To the Muni, the supreme being, together with his sons.
Sacred recipients of gifts, great compassionate ones, think kindly of me;
Accept these (offerings) of mine.

[7] Not being endowed with merit, I am destitute,
Having no other riches to offer.
Therefore, protector, you who care (only) for the welfare of others,
Accept these (offerings) with (your) powers for my own sake.

[8] To the victor and his sons
I shall constantly offer all my bodies.
Supreme heroic beings, please accept me completely;
I shall be your respectful subject.

[9] bdag ni khyed kyis yongs-su-bzung-bas na /
srid na mi 'jigs sems-can phan-par-bgyid /
sngon gyi sdig-las yang-dag 'da' bgyid cing /
sdig-pa gzhan yang slan-chad mi bgyid do /

[10] khrus-kyi-khang-pa shin-tu dri-zhim-pa /
shel-gyi-sa-gzhi gsal zhing 'tsher-ba bstar /
rin-chen 'bar-ba'i ka-ba yid 'ong-ldan /
mu-tig 'od-chags bla-re bres-pa der /

[11] de-bzhin-gshegs-pa dang de yi sras rnams la /
rin-chen-bum-pa mang-po spos-kyi-chu /
yid 'ong legs-par bkang-ba glu dang ni /
rol-mor bcas-pa du-mas sku-khrus-gsol /

[12] de-dag sku la mtshungs-pa-med-pa'i gos /
gtsang la dri rab-bsgom-pas sku-phyi'o /
de-nas de la kha-dog legs bsgyur-ba'i /
na-bza' shin-tu dri-zhim dam-pa 'bul /

[13] gos-bzang srab la 'jam-pa sna-tshogs dang /
rgyan-mchog brgya-phrag de dang de-dag gis /
'phags-pa kun-tu-bzang dang 'jam-dbyangs dang /
'jig-rten-dbang-phyug sogs la'ang brgyan-par-bgyi /

[14] stong-gsum kun-tu dri-ngad ldang-ba yi /
dri-mchog rnams kyis thub-dbang kun gyi sku /
gser-sbyangs btso-ma byi-dor-byas-pa ltar /
'od-chags 'bar-ba de-dag byug-par-bgyi /

[15] thub-dbang mchod-gnas mchog la yid-'ong-ba'i /
me-tog man-da-ra dang pad-ma dang /
ut-pal la-sogs dri-zhim thams-cad dang /
phreng-ba spel-legs yid-'ong rnams kyis mchod /

[16] spos-mchog yid-'phrog dri-ngad khyab-pa yi /
bdug-pa'i sprin-tshogs rnams kyang de la 'bul /
zhal-zas bza'-btung sna-tshogs bcas-pa yi /
lha-bshol rnams kyang de la dbul-bar-bgyi /

[9] When I am completely cared for by you,
I shall benefit sentient beings without fearing saṃsāric existence;
I shall perfectly transcend my previous negative deeds
And furthermore shall not commit wicked deeds in the future.

[10] (In) very sweetly scented bathing pavilions
(With) luminous and sparkling, level crystal floors,
Endowed with exquisite pillars ablaze with gems,
Aglow with pearls, canopies are hanging; there

[11] I offer bathing to the tathāgatas and their sons
With many precious vases,
Properly filled with pleasant scented water,
Accompanied by various songs and music.

[12] I dry their bodies with incomparable cloths,
Clean and well-powdered with scent,
And then I present them excellent things,
Garments of colors well-dyed, (powdered with) most sublime sweet-smelling fragrance.

[13] With each and every one (of the many) hundreds of excellent ornaments
And various noble garments, fine and smooth,
I adorn the noble Samantabhadra, Mañjughoṣa,
Lokeśvara and others.

[14] Just like polishing cleaned and refined gold,
I anoint the bodies of all lords of the sages with supreme perfumes
Of scented fragrances permeating all 'third order of a thousand (world systems)'.
So that they glow and sparkle in their luster.

[15] To the lords of the sages, the supreme objects for offerings,
I offer every (variety of) beautiful flowers, sweetly fragrant,
Such as māndāravā-flower, lotus, utpal and others
As well as beautiful, well-arranged garlands.

[16] I also offer (the victors and their sons) cloud banks of incense that spreads
A supreme scent of sweet fragrance, captivating the mind;
And I present them royal delicacies,
Including a variety of food and drink.

[17] gser gyi pad-ma tshar-du-dngar-ba yi /
rin-chen sgron-me rnams kyang dbul-bar-bgyi /
sa-gzhi bstar-ba spos kyis byugs-pa der /
me-tog yid-'ong sil-ma dkram-par-bgyi /

[18] gzhal-med pho-brang bstod-dbyangs yid-'ong-ldan /
mu-tig rin-chen rgyan-'phyang mdzes 'bar-ba /
dpag-yas nam-mkha'i rgyan-gyur de-dag kyang /
thugs-rje'i-rang-bzhin-can la dbul-bar-bgyi /

[19] rin chen gdugs mdzes gser gyi yu ba can /
khor yug rgyan gyi rnam pa yid 'ong brgyan /
dbyibs legs lta na sdug pa bsgreng ba yang /
rtag tu thub dbang rnams la dbul bar bgyi /

[20] de las gzhan yang mchod-pa'i-tshogs
rol-mo dbyangs snyan yid'ong-ldan /
sems-can sdug-bsngal sim-byed-pa'i /
sprin rnams so-sor gnas-gyur-cig /

[21] dam-chos dkon-mchog thams-cad dang /
mchod-rten rnams dang sku-gzugs la /
rin-chen me-tog la-sogs char /
rgyun-mi-'chad-par 'bab-par-shog /

[22] ji-ltar 'jam-dbyangs la-sogs-pas /
rgyal-ba rnams la mchod mdzad-pa /
de-bzhin bdag gis de-bzhin-gshegs /
mgon-po sras dang-bcas rnams mchod /

[23] yon-tan rgya-mtsho rnams la bdag
bstod-dbyangs yan-lag rgya-mtsho bstod /
bstod-dbyangs snyan-sprin de-dag la /
nges-par kun-tu 'byung-gyur-cig /

[24] dus-gsum-gshegs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas kun /
chos dang tshogs-kyi-mchog bcas la /
zhing-rdul kun gyi grangs-snyed kyi /
lus-btud-pas ni bdag phyag-'tshal /

[17] I offer precious lamps
Arranged in rows upon golden lotuses;
On a level floor anointed with perfume,
I scatter petals of lovely flower blossoms.

[18] To those who have the nature of compassion
I offer also these unfathomable palaces endowed with beautiful melodies of praise,
Exquisitely radiating, bedecked with ornaments of pearls and gems,
Serving as an adornment for immeasurable space.

[19] I constantly offer to the lords of the sages
Precious and lovely parasols with golden handles
And exquisite ornamental designs embellishing the rims.
Hoisted, their excellent shapes are beautiful to behold.

[20] In addition, may masses of offerings
Endowed with sweet and pleasing melodies of musical instruments
Each remain as (offering) clouds,
Soothing the misery of beings.

[21] May a rain of gems, flowers and the like
Continuously descend
Upon all sublime jewels of dharma
And upon stūpas and images.

[22] In the same way as Mañjughoṣa and others
Have made offerings to the victors,
Similarly I present offerings to the tathāgatas,
The protectors and their sons.

[23] I praise the oceans of qualities
With an ocean of variations of melodious eulogies;
May clouds of lovely melodies of praise
Actually ascend to them at all times.

[24] To all buddhas who appear throughout the three times,
To the dharma and the supreme among gatherings,
Bowing down with bodies as numerous
As all the atoms in the buddha fields, I pay respect.

[25] byang-chub-sems kyi gzhi rnams dang /
mchod-rten rnams la bdag phyag-'tshal /
mkhan-po de-bzhin slob-dpon dang /
brtul-zhugs-mchog la phyag-'tshal-lo /

[26] byang-chub-snying-por mchis-kyi-bar /
sangs-rgyas rnams la skyabs-su-mchi /
chos dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' yi /
tshogs la'ang de-bzhin skyabs-su-mchi /

[27] phyogs rnams kun na bzhugs-pa yi /
rdzogs-sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems /
thugs-rje-chen-po-mnga'-rnams la /
thal-mo-sbyar-te gsol-ba ni /

[28] thog ma med ldan 'khor ba nas /
tshe rabs 'di'am gzhan dag tu /
bdag gis ma 'tshal sdig bgyis pa'am /
bgyid du stsal ba nyid dang ni /

[29] gti-mug 'khrul-pas bdag non te /
rjes-su-yi-rang gang bgyis-pa /
nongs-pa de ni mthong-bgyis nas
bsam-pa-thag-pas mgon la bshags /

[30] bdag gis dkon-mchog-gsum dang ni /
pha-ma'am bla-ma gzhan-dag la /
nyon-mongs sgo-nas lus ngag dang /
yid kyis gnod-bgyis gang lags-pa /

[31] nyes-pa du-mas skyon-chags-pa'i /
sdig-can bdag gis sdig-pa gang /
shin-tu mi-bzad bgyis-pa de /
thams-cad-'dren-pa rnams la bshags /

[32] bdag ni sdig pa ma byang bar /
sngon-du 'gum-par-'gyur du mchi /
ji-ltar 'di las nges thar-bar /
myur-ba'i tshul-gyis bskyab-tu-gsol /

[25] To the basis of bodhicitta
And to (all) stūpas I pay respect.
Likewise, to the preceptors and to the teachers
As well as to the supreme practitioners, I pay respect.

[26] I go for refuge to the buddhas
Until I attain the essence of awakening.
Likewise, I go for refuge to the dharma
And to the gathering of bodhisattvas.

[27] Perfect buddhas and bodhisattvas,
Endowed with great compassion,
Residing in all directions,
Joining my palms, I beseech you thus:

[28] Throughout beginningless saṃsāra
In this lifetime and in others,
Ignorantly I committed negative deeds,
Incited (others) to commit them and,

[29] Overwhelmed by the delusion of ignorance,
I rejoiced (in negativity). Whichever of these (deeds) I have done,
Recognizing this as a fault,
I confess to you, protectors, from the depth of my heart.

[30] Whatever harm I have done due to my afflictions,
With body, speech and mind,
To the three jewels,
My father, mother, teachers and others;

[31] Whatever negative deeds I, the wicked one—
(To whose mind) the stains of various mistakes cling—
Have committed, (even) the most intolerable acts,
I confess them to the guides of all.

[32] I may well come to perish
Before my wicked deeds have been purified.
What then will liberate me with certainty from these?
Please grant me your protection in a swift manner.

[33] yid-brtan mi-rung 'chi-bdag 'di /
byas dang ma byas mi sdod-pas /
na dang mi na kun gyis kyang /
glo-bur tshe la yid-mi-brtan /

[34] thams cad bor te chas dgos par /
bdag gis de ltar ma shes pas /
mdza' dang mi mdza'i don gyi phyir /
sdig pa rnam pa sna tshogs byas /

[35] mi-mdza' rnams kyang med-'gyur zhing /
mdza'-ba rnams kyang med-par-'gyur /
bdag kyang med-par-'gyur-ba ste /
de-bzhin thams-cad med-par-'gyur /

[36] rmi-lam nyams-su-myong-ba bzhin /
dngos-po gang-dang-gang spyad-pa /
de de dran-pa'i-yul-du-'gyur /
'das-pa thams-cad mthong-mi-'gyur /

[37] re-zhig gson-tshe 'di-nyid la'ang /
mdza' dang mi-mdza' du-ma 'das /
de-dag don-du byas-pa'i sdig /
mi-bzad gang-yin mdun-na-gnas /

[38] de-ltar bdag ni glo-bur zhes /
bdag gis rtogs-pas ma gyur-pas /
gti-mug chags dang zhe-sdang gis /
sdig-pa rnam-pa du-ma byas /

[39] nyin mtshan sdod-pa yong-med-par /
tshe-'di rtag-tu god-'gyur zhing /
snon-pa gud-nas 'ong-med na /
bdag lta 'chi-bar cis-mi-'gyur /

[40] bdag ni mal na 'dug bzhin-du /
gnyen-bshes kun gyis mtha'-bskor kyang /
srog-'chad-pa yi tshor-ba dag /
bdag-nyid gcig-pus myong-bar-'gyur /

[33] This unreliable (Māra of) Death
Will not wait, (whether your tasks) are completed or not completed.
Therefore, no one, neither the ill nor the healthy,
Should place his trust in this fleeting life.

[34] One must depart (alone), leaving all behind.
But I, not understanding this,
Have committed various kinds of negative deeds
For the sake of friends and foes.

[35] Foes will cease to be;
Friends will cease to be;
I too will cease to be;
Likewise, everything will cease to be.

[36] Just like an experience in a dream,
Whatever things I have enjoyed
Have become a (mere) object of memory of 'this and that'.
I will not see (again) anything that has passed.

[37] Even within this very life, while I am briefly alive,
Many friends and foes have passed,
But whatever unbearable negative deeds I committed for their sake,
(The karmic ripening of these deeds) remains ahead of me.

[38] Thus, as I did not realize
That I am ephemeral,
I committed many forms of negative deeds
Out of ignorance, attachment and aversion.

[39] Remaining neither day nor night,
This life is constantly slipping away.
And since (life) is never getting any longer,
Why would death not come to one like me?

[40] While I am lying in bed,
Even though (I am) surrounded by my friends and relatives,
I alone will experience
The feeling of life being severed.

[41] gshin-rje'i-pho-nyas zin-pa la /
gnyen gyis ci-phan bshes ci-phan /
de-tshe bsod-nams gcig skyabs na /
de-yang bdag gis ma bsten to /

[42] mgon-po bag-med bdag gis ni /
'jigs-pa 'di-'dra ma 'tshal nas /
mi-rtag tshe-'di'i-ched-dag-tu /
sdig-pa mang-po nye-bar-bsgrubs /

[43] skye-po yan-lag-gcod-pa'i-sar /
de-ring khrid-pa'ang bred-'gyur te /
kha-skam mig-rtsa-ngan la-sogs /
snga-las-gzhan-du-'gyur snang na /

[44] gshin-rje'i-pho-nya 'jigs-'jigs lta'i /
sha-tshugs-can gyis bzung-gyur cing /
'jigs-chen nad-kyis-thebs-gyur pa /
rab-tu nyam-thag smos-ci-dgos /

[45] su-zhig 'jigs-chen 'di las bdag /
legs-par skyob-par-byed-'gyur zhes /
bred-sha-thon-pa'i mig-bgrad nas /
phyogs-bzhir skyabs dag tshol-bar-byed /

[46] phyogs-bzhir skyabs-med mthong nas ni /
de-nas kun-tu yi-mug-'gyur /
gnas der skyabs yod-ma-yin na /
de-tshe bdag gis ji-ltar bya /

[47] de-bas rgyal-ba 'gro-ba'i-mgon /
'gro-ba skyob-pa'i don-brtson-pa /
stobs-chen 'jigs-pa kun sel la /
de-ring-nyid-nas skyabs-su-mchi /

[48] de yi thugs-su-chud-pa'i chos /
'khor-ba'i-'jigs-pa sel-ba dang /
byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs la yang /
de-bzhin yang-dag skyabs-su-mchi /

[41] When captured by the messengers of the Lord of Death,
What benefit will relatives afford? What benefit will friends afford?
At that time (my) merit should protect me,
But upon that I have never relied.

[42] Protectors! I, so heedless,
Unaware of such terror as this,
Committed many a negative deed
For the sake of this transient life.

[43] If those people, who are led today
To the place where their limbs will be amputated, are petrified,
With parched mouths and glazed eyes,
Appearing different than before,

[44] Then needless to mention (my) tremendous despair
When taken by the physical forms
Of the fearsome looking messengers of the Lord of Death,
When (I am thus) stricken with the disease of great panic.

[45] Who can really protect me
From this great horror?
With eyes gaping in an expression of terror
I will search the four quarters for refuge.

[46] Seeing no refuge in the four quarters
I will become completely depressed.
If there is no refuge on that occasion,
Then what should I do at that time?

[47] Therefore, from today onward I go for refuge
To the Victor, the protector of beings,
Who strives to shelter all beings
And with great power eradicates all fear.

[48] To the dharma he has realized,
Which clears away the fears of saṃsāra,
And also to the assembly of bodhisattvas,
I genuinely go for refuge in the same manner.

[49] bdag ni 'jigs-pas rnam-skrag nas /
kun-tu-bzang la bdag-nyid 'bul /
'jam-pa'i-dbyangs la'ang bdag-nyid kyis /
bdag gi lus 'di dbul-bar-bgyi /

[50] thugs-rje'i-spyod-pa ma-'khrul- ba /
spyan-ras-gzigs-mgon de la yang /
nyam-thag nga-ros 'o-dod-'bod /
sdig-ldan bdag la bskyab-tu-gsol /

[51] 'phags-pa nam-mkha'i-snying-po la /
sa-yi-snying-po dag dang ni /
thugs-rje-che-mgon thams-cad la /
skyabs-tshol snying-nas 'o-dod-'bod /

[52] gang-zhig mthong nas gshin-rje yi /
pho-nya la-sogs sdang-ba rnams /
skrag nas phyogs-bzhir 'byer-byed-pa /
rdo-rje-can la'ang skyabs-su-mchi /

[53] sngon-chad khyed kyi bka'-las-'das /
da ni 'jigs-pa-che mthong nas /
khyed la skyabs-su-mchi lags kyis /
'jigs-pa myur-du bsal-du-gsol /

[54] tha-mal nad kyis 'jigs na-yang /
sman-pa'i-ngag-bzhin bya dgos na /
'dod-chags la-sogs nyes brgya yi /
nad kyis rtag btab smos-ci-dgos /

[55] de gcig gis kyang 'dzam-gling na /
gnas-pa'i mi kun brlag-byed na /
de-dag gso-ba'i-sman gzhan ni /
phyogs rnams kun-nas mi rnyed na

[56] de la sman-pa thams-cad mkhyen /
zug-ngu thams-cad 'byin-pa yi /
bka' ltar mi byed sems-pa ni /
shin-tu gti-mug smad-pa'i-gnas /

[49] Utterly panicking with fear, I
Offer myself to Samantabhadra;
To Mañjughoṣa as well
I myself offer this body of mine.

[50] Also to the protector Avalokita,
Whose compassionate conduct is without delusion,
I let out a lamentation of mournful crying,
"Please grant me, the wicked one, protection!"

[51] In the noble Ākāśagarbha,
In Kṣitigarbha, and
In all protectors of great compassion
I seek refuge, crying out in lamentation from my heart.

[52] I go for refuge to Vajrī,[4]
The sight of whom frightens (all) hateful ones,
Such as the messengers of the Lord of Death,
And causes them to flee in terror to the four quarters.

[53] Previously, I ignored your teaching.
Now, catching sight of great terror,
I go for refuge to you.
Please swiftly clear away (these) fears.

[54] If I must comply with a physician's advice
When frightened by a common disease,
Then no need to mention (that I must heed the Buddha) when perpetually infected
With diseases of hundreds of misdeeds such as desire and so forth.

[55] If all people living in Jambudvīpa
Can be destroyed by just one of these (diseases of afflictions),
And if no other medicine to cure these
Can be found in any quarter,

[56] Then concerning this, those who have the intention to disregard
The advice of the omniscient physician
That can uproot all misery
Are extremely ignorant and deserve to be criticized.

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[4] Vajrī [rdo rje can] means 'having a vajra' and refers to Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje].

[57] g.yang-sa tha-mal chung-ngu la'ang /
bag-yod gnas-par-bya dgos na /
dpag-tshad stong du ltung-ba yi /
yun-ring g.yangs-sar smos-ci-dgos /

[58] de-ring kho-na mi 'chi zhes /
bde-bar 'dug-pa rigs-ma-yin /
bdag ni med-par-'gyur-ba'i dus /
de ni gdon-mi-zar-bar 'gyur /

[59] bdag la mi 'jigs su-yis byin /
'di las ji-ltar nges-thar-'gyur /
gdon-mi-za-bar med-'gyur na /
ci'i-phyir bdag yid-bde-bar 'dug /

[60] sngon chad myong ste zhig pa las /
bdag la lhag pa ci yod na /
bdag ni de la mngon zhen nas /
bla ma'i bka' dang 'gal bar byas /

[61] gson-tshe 'di dang de-bzhin-du /
gnyen dang bshes-pa rnams spangs nas /
gcig-pu ga-shed 'gro dgos na /
mdza' dang mi-mdza' kun ci-rung /

[62] mi dge ba las sdug bsngal 'byung /
de las ji ltar nges thar zhes /
nyin mtshan rtag tu bdag gis ni /
'di nyid 'ba' zhig bsam pa'i rigs /

[63] bdag ni mi-shes gti-mug-pas /
rang-bzhin-kha-na-ma-tho'am /
bcas-pa'i-sdig-pa gang-yin las /
gang-yang-rung-ba bgyis-pa rnams /

[64] mgon-po'i spyan-sngar mngon-sum-du /
thal-sbyar sdug-bsngal 'jigs-sems kyis /
yang-dang-yang-du phyag-'tshal te /
de-dag thams-cad bshags-par-bgyi /

[57] If I must remain heedful
(When approaching) even a small, ordinary drop,
Then how much more so (when in fear of falling) into a chasm
That drops thousands of leagues, (where I have to remain) for a long time.

[58] It is unreasonable to rest easy
Thinking, "Today, at least, I shall not die,"
For inevitably the time will come
When I shall become nothing.

[59] Who can assure me (that I need) not fear?
How can I be surely freed from this (fear of dying)?
If I will inevitably become nothing,
How can my mind rest at ease?

[60] Is there anything that remains with me
From what I experienced before, which has (not already) vanished?
Nevertheless, I am clearly attached to these (pleasures),
And have disregarded my guru's advice.

[61] As I must abandon this life and in the same way
My relatives and friends
When I must go alone to an uncertain destination,
What use are all my friends and enemies?

[62] Since from non-virtuous actions suffering will arise,
How can I surely free (my mind) from these?
Thinking constantly, day and night,
About this alone, is (most) appropriate.

[63] Whatever I may have done
Due to ignorance and stupidity,
Among (all) unreported misdeeds of (violating) natural laws
Or all negative deeds of (breaking) established rules,

[64] In the direct sight of the protectors,
With palms joined and mind terrified by the misery (to come),
I prostrate again and again,
Confessing all these (misdeeds).

[65] 'dren-pa rnams kyis bdag gi sdig /
nongs-pa lags-par gzung-du-gsol /
'di ni bzang-po ma lags-pas /
slan-chad bdag ni yong mi bgyid /

byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las / sdig-pa-bshags-pa'i-le'u ste gnyis-pa'o //

[65] I beseech the guides (of the world)
To accept me as I am, at fault due to my negative deeds.
Since these (negative deeds) are not good,
From now on I shall never repeat them.

From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the second, the chapter on Confessing Negativity.

Khenpo Kunpal's commentary

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

on the
Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Chapter Two

Confessing Negative Deeds

Tibetan and English

[66] le'u gnyis-pa sdig-pa-bshags-pa'i-le'u la / gzhung dang / mtshan no // dang-po la / mchod-pa-'bul-ba'i-yan-lag / phyag-'tshal-ba'i-yan-lag / skyabs-su-'gro-ba'i-yan-lag / sdig-pa-bshags-pa'i-yan-lag dang bzhi las /

[67] dang-po la / dngos-su-'byor-ba'i-mchod-pa / yid-kyis-sprul-pa'i-mchod-pa / smon-lam-stobs-kyis-mchod-pa / bla-na-med-pa'i-mchod-pa / bstod-pa-dbyangs-kyi-mchod-pa dang lnga las /

[68] dang-po la / bdag-pos-yongs-su-bzung-ba'i-mchod-pa / bdag-pos-yongs-su-ma-bzung-ba'i-mchod-pa / lus-'bul-ba'i-mchod-pa dang gsum las /

[69] dang-po ni / yon-tan-gyi-khyad-par de-lta-bu dang-ldan-pa'i rin-chen-byang-chub-kyi-sems de rgyu-med rkyen-med du mi 'byung-bas rgyu-tshogs tshang dgos la / de-yang mgon-po-klu-sgrub kyis tshogs-rdzogs-pa dang / thogs-med kyis sems dvangs-pa zhig gi rgyud la byang-chub-kyi-sems skye-bar gsungs shing / tshogs-bsags-pa thams-cad-kyi-mchog mchod-pa yin zhing mchod-pa rnam-dag zhig bshams-pas sems dvangs-par yang 'gyur ro //

[70] de'i-phyir sngon mnyam-med jo-bo-rjer bod kyis sems-bskyed-zhus-pa na mchod-pa bshoms gsungs / bshams-pa na 'di-'dras-mi-'ong-gsungs nas ma gnang / yang bsham-pa la'ang de-ltar gsung / yang de-bas-cher bshams-pa na 'ong-tsam-gsungs nas gzod-gnang-bas na mchod-pa gal-che'o /

[71] des-na rang la yod kyi longs-spyod cha-gsum-du-byas-pa'i cha-gcig rang gi 'tsho-ba'i cha rkyen-du-bzhag nas cha-gnyis dkon-mchog gi mchod-par-sbyor dgos-par gsungs /

> inserted root text : stanza 1
>
> rin-chen-sems de gzung-bar-bya-ba'i phyir /
> de-bzhin-gshegs-pa rnams dang dam-pa'i-chos /
> dkon-mchog dri-ma-med dang sangs-rgyas-sras /
> yon-tan rgya-mtsho rnams la legs-par mchod /

[72] mchod-pa de yang-dag-pa-rnam-pa-gsum gyi sgo-nas mchod dgos te / bsam-pa-dag-pa ni / **rin-chen**-byang-chub-kyi-**sems de** rang-rgyud la **bzung-ba**'am bskyed-par-**bya-ba'i phyir** ram ched-du 'bul-ba'o / /

[66] The second chapter, the chapter on confessing negative deeds, has two (parts): the text and its title. The first (part) has four (sections): the section on presenting offerings; the section on paying respect; the section on going for refuge; and the section on confessing negative deeds.

The section on presenting offerings

[67] Of these, the first section has five (parts): offerings that are actually assembled; offerings that are mentally created; offerings (made) through the power of aspirations; unexcelled offerings; and offerings of melodious praise.

[68] Of these, the first has three (parts): offerings that belong to an owner; offerings that do not belong to an owner; and offerings of presenting one's body.

Offerings that belong to an owner

[69] Of these, the first: Since this precious bodhicitta which is endowed with such special qualities does not arise without causes or conditions, you need to complete the accumulation of its causes. In this regard, Lord Nāgārjuna said, "You need to perfect the accumulations," and Asaṅga stated, "In the stream of a pure mind bodhicitta will be born." The supreme (method) among all (forms of) gathering the accumulations is to present offerings, and by arranging a perfect offering, your mind will become pure.

[70] For that reason, when in former times Tibetans requested the incomparable Lord Atiśa to give the bodhicitta (precepts), he answered, "Set up offerings." When they had set them up he said, "That won't do," and did not give (the precepts). When they had set (the offerings) up again, he said the same thing. After they had arranged even more offerings than before he said, "This will barely do" and gave his consent reluctantly. Therefore, offerings are very important.

[71] That is why (Atiśa) said, "Dividing all the goods you possess into three parts, you should set aside one part as a condition for your own livelihood and use two parts as an offering to the (three) jewels."

> inserted root text: stanza 1
>
> In order to adopt this precious bodhicitta,
> (I) present offerings in an excellent way to the tathāgatas,
> To the sublime dharma, the immaculate jewel,
> And to the sons of the buddhas, who are an ocean of qualities.

[72] The offerings must be presented with the three-fold purity. (1) The pure motivation: **In order to adopt** or generate **this precious bodhicitta** in my mind, I present (offerings).

[73] zhing-dag-pa ni / chos-nyid **de-bzhin**-nyid dang rjes-su-mthun-par **gshegs-pa** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das **rnams dang** /

gang-zhig gang-gis chags-bral-ba //
bden-gnyis mtshan-nyid-can de chos //
chags-bral-nyid ni 'gog-pa dang //
lam-gyi-bden-pa dag-gis bsdus //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[74] gang-gis chags-pa-dang-bral-bar-byed-pa lam-gyi-bden-pa dang / gang chags-pa-dang-bral-ba 'gog-pa'i-bden-pa ste **dam-pa'i-chos dkon-mchog dri-ma-med**-pa

dang / **sangs-rgyas**-kyi-**sras** byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams sa-dang-po thob tshe yon-tan-brgya-phrag-bcu-gnyis / gnyis-par stong-phrag-bcu-gnyis la-sogs-pa'i **yon-tan-rgya-mtsho** lta-bu'i bdag-nyid-can **rnams la** /

[75] dngos-po-dag-pa ni / **legs-par** te rgyu-bzang-ba spus-gtsang-ba bkod-legs-pa ste / de-yang rgyu-bzang-ba log-'tsho dang sdig-pas ma sgrubs / nga-rgyal dang ngom-chos su ma song / ser-sna dang 'jur-'gegs kyis ma bcing-ba dang / gtsang-sgra dang bcas-pas spus-gtang-ba rang-la-yod-tshod kyi dngos-po gang-legs gang-gces gang-dkon-pa des mchod na ser-sna'i-gnyen-por yang 'gro /

[76] gzhan-du thud-kyi-sngo-sa dang lo-ma'i-ser-sa sogs kyis mchod na bsod-nams-'dzad-pa'i rgyur-'gro-bas mi-rung ngo // bkod-legs-pa ste mtho-dman-med-par khad-snyoms-pa / yo-'khyogs-med-par drang-ba / bdun-tshar sogs byi-dor-byas-pa / legs-par-bkang-ba zhig dgos kyi / chu sogs kyis ma khengs na longs-spyod-dbul-ba'i-nyes-pa dang / phyir-bos na tshul-khrims-'chal-ba'i-nyes-pa 'byung zhing / yon-chab tu mchod-nas-'thor-bas skran-nad 'byung-ba sogs skyon dang bral-bar bshams ste **mchod** dgos so //

[77] gnyis-pa ni / phyogs-bcu'i 'jig-rten-gyi-khams su mkho-dgu'i dpal-'byor rang gis mthong thos gang-yod 'bul-ba ste / 'di-dag gi rnam-pa yid-la-dran-pa'am ming-tsam mam de-dang-de-lta-bu yod-pas 'bul-ba yin no snyam-pas chog la /

[73] (2) The pure object: (I present offerings to) the buddhas, the bhagavāns, **the tathāgatas**, 'those who have gone in accord with the natural state as it is'.

As it is said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> That which is and that which frees one from craving
> Is the dharma, marked with the twofold truth.
> Free from craving, it contains the truth of cessation
> And the truth of the path.

[74] (I present offerings to) that which frees one from craving, the truth of the path, and to that which is free from craving, the truth of cessation, i.e. **the sublime dharma, the immaculate jewel**.

And (I present offerings) **to the sons of the buddhas**, the bodhisattvas, **who are** the embodiments of **an ocean of qualities**, such as being endowed with one thousand two hundred qualities once they have reached the first bhumi, twelve thousand on (reaching) the second, and so forth.

[75] (3) The pure substance: **In an excellent way** means (the offerings) should be of noble substance, clean and excellently displayed. Furthermore, the noble substances should not be acquired through wrong livelihood or wicked deeds. (The offerings) should not serve pride or pretentiousness, nor should they be fettered by miserliness or malevolence. Washed and wiped, they should be in perfect condition. If you offer the most excellent, most cherished and most rare of all the things you possess, then (the offerings) will suffice as a remedy for miserliness.

[76] Furthermore, you should **present offerings** by arranging them without mistakes. For example, offering moldy cheese or withered leaves and the like is inappropriate as it will form the cause for your merit to dwindle. (The offerings should be) excellently displayed, meaning (they should be laid out) evenly, without (any) being higher or lower. They should be straight, without being out of line. The seven offering bowls and the like should be wiped and cleaned. They should be properly filled since, if they are not properly filled with water and other (substances), this leads to the defect of losing one's wealth. If (the water) spills out, it leads to the defect of losing one's discipline. If you (carelessly) throw consecrated rice in the water bowls, it leads to the rise of tumors and the like.

Offerings that do not belong to an owner

[77] Second: Offer all desirable riches, all that you see or hear in the expanse of the world systems of the ten directions. It is alright to think, "I will offer all things that I can think of, can merely name or that exist."

inserted root text: stanza 2

me-tog 'bras-bu ji-snyed yod-pa dang /
sman-gyi-rnam-pa gang-dag yod-pa dang /
'jig-rten rin-chen ji-snyed yod-pa dang /
chu-gtsang yid-du-'ong-ba ci-yod dang /

[78] de-yang dngos-po gang-dang-gang 'bul na dag-pa'i-zhing dang lha-klu-mi sogs mtha'-yas-pa'i zhing rnams su pad-ma-dkar-po dang manda-ra dang utpal la-sogs-pa chu dang thang las skyes-pa'i **me-tog** ji-snyed yod-pa dang bilva dang a-smra dang nas 'bras gro la-sogs-pa **'bras-bu ji-snyed yod-pa dang** / sman-gyi-rgyal-po-gi-vang dang bzang-drug sogs la sman-rtsi sman-rdo sman-ldum **sman-gyi-rnam-pa**'am rigs-su-gtogs-pa **gang-dag yod-pa dang** / **'jig-rten**-gyi-khams na dgos-'dod-kun-'byung-gi-yid-bzhin-gyi-nor-bu-rin-po-che dang / vaiḍūrya dang / indra-nī-la la-sogs pa'i **rin-chen** gang **ji-snyed yod-pa dang** /

[79] mdo las /

bsil dang zhim dang yang dang 'jam //
dvangs-ba'i chu ni dri-ma-med //
'thung na lto la mi gnod cing //
mgrin-pa la ni mi gnod-pa//

zhes yan-lag-brgyad-ldan-gyi-chu mtsho-ma-dros-pa dang de'i phyogs-bzhi nas shar gang-ga / lho sin-dhū / nub pakṣu / byang si-ta ste kha-'bab-kyi-chu-bo-chen-po-bzhi dang rol-pa'i-mtsho-bdun la-sogs-pa **chu gtsang**-ma **yid-du-'ong-ba ci-yod dang** / mnyam-med-jo-bos kyang bod 'dir chu legs-pas 'di-nyid gcig-pu'i tshogs-bsags kyang chog ces gsungs /

inserted root text: stanza 3

rin-chen ri-bo dang ni de-bzhin-du /
nags-tshal sa-phyogs dben zhing nyams-dga' dang /
ljon-shing me-tog rgyan-spras spud-pa dang /
shing gang 'bras-bzang yal-ga dud-pa dang /

[80] **rin-chen**-sna-bzhi las grub-pa'i ri'i-rgyal-po-ri-rab dang gser-gyi-ri-bdun la-sogs-pa'i **ri-bo dang ni de-bzhin-du nags-tshal** gyi mthongs zhes mtha' tsan-dan sogs kyis bskor-ba'i dben-gnas nyams-dga'-ba dang /

> inserted root text: stanza 2
>
> Whatever flowers and fruits there are
> And whatever kinds of medicine,
> Whatever jewels exist in this world
> And whatever clean and pleasing waters there are;

[78] Furthermore, if I offer all things that exist, then (I offer) whatever **flowers** might grow in the pure realms or in the (impure) realms of gods, nāgas and humans, in water or on a meadow, such as the white lotus, the mandāravā flower or the utpal lotus. (I offer) **whatever fruits there are,** such as the bilwa fruit, the mango fruit or barley, rice and wheat. **And** (I offer) **whatever** forms or **kinds of medicine**, medicinal stones or medicinal plants, medicine such as the king of all medicines, gorochana and the six excellent substances. (I offer) the precious wish-fulfilling jewel that grants all that is needed and wanted **in this world**. I offer **whatever jewels exist** such as beryl, sapphire, and others.

[79] As it is said in a sūtra:

> Cooling, tasty, light, and soft,
> Pure water free from impurity,
> Which when drinking neither harms the stomach
> Nor harms the throat.

Thus, (I offer) water endowed with eight qualities, the water of lake Manasarovar and the four great rivers that spring from (different) mouths on its four sides: Gaṅga to the east, Sindhu to the south, Vakṣu to the west and Sītā to the north. **And** I offer **whatever clean and pleasing waters there are**, like the seven pleasure pools (on Mount Sumeru). Even the incomparable Lord (Atiśa) remarked, "The water in Tibet is so excellent that by offering this (water) alone the accumulations can be gathered."

> inserted root text: stanza 3
>
> Jewel mountains and likewise
> Forests, remote and joyful places,
> Heavenly trees ornamented and bedecked with flowers
> As well as trees (laden with) beautiful fruits, bending down the branches;

[80] (I offer) **mountains** like the king of all mountains, Mount Sumeru, made out of four **jewels** and the seven golden mountains. **And likewise**, (I offer) remote and beautiful places called **forest** clearings, which are encircled by sandalwood trees and the like.

[81] **sa-phyogs** g.yu'i-maṇḍal phyis-pa lta-bu la me-tog sna-tshogs bkra-bas mdzes-pa nyin-mo mi'i-rgyu-'grul dang mtshan mo sgra'i-ca-co med-pas dben zhing nyams-dga'-ba rnams dang / ljon-pa'i-shing me-tog kha-dog sna-tshogs-pa'i rgyan-gyis-spras shing spud-pa ste phra-tshom-bkod-pa ltar mdzes-pa **dang** / **shing gang**-zhig rgun-'brum la-sogs-pa kha-dog dang dri ro phun-sum-tshogs-pa'i **'bras**-bu **bzang** la mang-ba'i ljid kyis yal-ga rnams dud-pa ste dma'-bar-'dug-pa **dang** /

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> lha sogs-'jig-rten na yang dri dang ni
> spos dang dpag-bsam-shing dang rin-chen-shing /
> ma-rmos-'khrungs pa'i-lo-tog rnam-pa dang /
> gzhan-yang mchod-par-'os-pa'i rgyan rnams ni /

[82] lha klu la-sogs-pa'i 'jig-rten-gyi-khams na yang tsan-dan sa mchog la-sogs-pa'i **dri**-yi-shing **dang ni** / a-ga-ru la-sogs-pa'i lhan-skyes dang / sbyar-byung-gi-**spos** dang / yongs-su-'du(s)-sa-brtol-kyi-ljon-pa sogs blos-ji-lar-dpag cing bsam-pa thams-cad 'byung-bas **dpag-bsam**-gyi-**shing dang** / bde-ba-can-kyi-zhing la-sogs-par gser la-sogs-pa'i rin-po-che-sna-bdun las grub-pa la-sogs-pa'i **rin-chen** sna-tshogs kyi **shing** dang / gshol-gyis-**ma-rmos** shing sa-bon-ma-btab-par rang-**'khrugs-pa'i** 'bras-sā-lu la-sogs-pa'i **lo-tog** gi **rnam-pa** mang-po **dang** / de-dag las **gzhan-yang** re-re-nas brjod-kyis-mi-lang-ba'i **mchod par-'os-pa'i rgyan**-gyi-rnam-grangs ji-snyed yod-pa **rnams** dang ni /

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> mtsho dang rdzing-bu pad-mas brgyan-pa dag /
> ngang-pa shin-tu skad-snyan yid-'ong ldan /
> nam-mkha' rab-'byams khams kyi mthas-gtugs-pa /
> yongs-su-bzung-ba-med-pa de-dag kun /

[83] grags-pa'i-mtsho-chen-bzhi dang / dri-med-mdangs-ldan g.yu-yi-mtsho la-sogs-pa'i **mtsho** chen-po kha-dog-sna-lnga padmas-brgyan-pa **dang rdzing**-bu chung-ngu mang-po **padmas-brgyan-pa** dang de-**dag** la **ngang-pa** dang bzhad la-sogs-pa'i bya-rigs sna-tshogs dung-gi-mdog ltar dkar-ba / gser-gyi-mdog ltar ser-ba / byu-ru'i-mdog ltar dmar-ba / g.yu-yi-mdog ltar ljang-ba la-sogs-pas mdzes-pa'i spu-sdug-ngoms shing **shin-tu** snyan-pa'i **skad-snyan**-sgrogs-pa **yid**-du-**'ong**-ba dang-**ldan**-pa dang /

[81] (I offer) **places** which are like cleansed turquoise maṇḍalas beautified by a display of various flowers. Since no streams of people pass by during the daytime and there is no noise at night, they are **remote and joyful**. (I offer) **heavenly trees**, **ornamented and bedecked with flowers** of various colors, beautiful like mosaic clusters, **as well as trees** that are so laden with **beautiful fruits** of perfect color, fragrance and taste, like grapes and others, that the weight of their multitude is **bending down the branches**, making them hang low.

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> Fragrances in the realms of gods and the like,
> Incense, wish-granting trees and jewel trees,
> Untilled and naturally grown crops,
> And furthermore, ornaments that are worthy to be offered;

[82] (I offer) **fragrances** of trees which exist **in the realms of gods**, nāgas **and the like**, such as white sandalwood trees. (I offer) naturally arisen substances, like aloe-wood,[5] as well as manufactured **incense**. (I offer) **wish-granting trees**, like the pārijāta tree and others, which grant all the mind can conceive of or fathom, **and** manifold **jewel trees**, like those in Sukhāvatī and other fields, which are made out of the seven precious substances such as gold and so forth. (I offer) many kinds of crops like salu rice, which are **naturally grown**, **untilled,** and without the sowing of seeds, **and furthermore**, in addition to these (offerings, I offer) any existing number of **ornaments that are worthy to be offered** but cannot all be individually mentioned.

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses,
> Wild geese, endowed with most beautiful voices,
> All these, which do not belong to an owner,
> Within the reaches of infinite space;

[83] (I offer) the four great and famous lakes. (I offer) great **lakes,** such as turquoise lakes, endowed with an immaculate radiance, ornamented with five-colored lotuses, **and** many small **pools adorned with lotuses**. They are beautified by various kinds of birds such as **wild geese** and swans, showing their lovely feathers, which are as white as the color of a conch, as yellow as the color of gold, as red as the color of coral and as green as the color of turquoise. They are **endowed with** resounding **beautiful voices**, **most** melodious and **pleasant**.

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[5] agaru: agallochum, amyris agallocha

[84] shar nyi-zla gnyis kyi sgron-me 'od-lam-me / lho tsan-dan nags-kyi-bdug-spos dri-zhim-thul-le / nub gangs-dkar mar-gyi-lha-bshos dkar-zengs-se / byang rdza-chab sngon-mo'i mchod-yon dvangs-seng-nge-ba la-sogs-pa gang-ji-snyed-yod-pa rnams las / me-tog la-sogs-pa de-dag re-re yang grangs-kyi-khyad-par **nam-mkha'-rab-'byams-khams-kyi-mthas-gtugs-pa** ste tshad-med-pa'i-nam-mkha'i gar-khyab-tu-khyab cing yod-pa thams-cad dang / kha-na-ma-tho-ba-med-pa'i-khyad-par bdag-po'i-**yongs-su-bzung-ba-med-pa** sgra-mi-snyan-pa'i-longs-spyod lta-bu **de-dag kun** /

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> blo-yis-blangs nas thub-pa skyes-kyi-mchog /
> sras dang-bcas-pa rnams la legs 'bul na /
> yon-gnas dam-pa thugs-rje-che-rnams kyis /
> bdag la brtser-dgongs bdag gi 'di-dag bzhes /

[85] sbyor-ba'i-khyad-par **blo-yis-blangs nas** zhes sems-thog-tu-bzung ste rang gi yin-pa lta-bu'i 'du-shes-bskyed cing phangs-sems-med-par /

[86] zhing-gi-khyad-par sku-gsung-thugs-kyi-mdzad-spyod bsrung-ba-med-par-thub-pas **thub-pa** 'gro-drug las snying-stobs-che-ba'i-**skyes**-bu rkang-gnyis-mi-rnams-**kyi-mchog** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das **sras** byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs **dang-bcas-pa rnams la legs**-par ste rin-chen-byang-chub-kyi-sems rang-rgyud la skye-ba'i don-du **'bul na** /

[87] yon-yongs-su-sbyong-ba-chen-po ste yon-chung-ngu-tsam phul na 'bras-bu chen-po sbyin-par-mdzad-pa dper-na sangs-rgyas la sran-rdog-bdun phul-bas mi-dbang-nga-las-nu dang bye-ma-spar-gang-gtor-bas chos-rgyal-mya-ngan-med du gyur-pa lta-bu'i **yon-gnas**-kyi-**dam-pa** sems-can rnams la g.yo-dang-sgyu-med-par phan-par-bzhed-pa'i **thugs**-snying-**rje-che**-ba **rnams kyis bdag**-cag la **brtser-dgongs** zhes thugs-brtse-ba-chen-pos nye-bar-dgongs te **bdag-gi** mchod-pa **'di-dag bzhes**-par-mdzad-du-gsol zhes so //

[84] (I offer) whatever exists, such as the light of the sun and of the moon that shines luminously in the east; the pleasant fragrance of incense forests of sandalwood, which abound everywhere in the south; white snow mountains of butter as food for the gods, which glow brightly in the west; and waterfalls of blue offering water that are sparkling pure in the north. Among all these, for each individual (offering), such as flowers and so forth, the special distinction of its quantity is that (it includes) everything that exists **within the reaches of infinite space**, meaning all there is, as far as immeasurable space extends. The special distinction of faultlessness is that **all these** (offerings) **which do not belong to an owner** are like the riches of (the continent) Kurava.

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> Creating these in my mind, I offer them in an excellent way
> To the Muni, the supreme being, together with his sons.
> Sacred recipients of gifts, great compassionate ones, think kindly of me;
> Accept these (offerings) of mine.

[85] There is a special distinction concerning the presentation, as it says (in the root text): '**creating these in my mind'**. This means, you keep them in your mind, creating the attitude, "These are mine," and (you offer them) without any miserliness.

[86] There is a special distinction concerning the object, as it is **the Muni**, the one who is capable of performing the activities of body, speech and mind without being on guard, **the being** with the greatest courage among the beings of the six classes, the **supreme** among human beings, the Buddha, the Bhagavān, **together with** the assembly of bodhisattvas, **his sons**. **I offer to** all these **in an excellent way**, so that in my mind the precious bodhicitta will be born.

[87] 'They are the perfect recipients of gifts', meaning they grant great fruition even if you offer only a small gift. For example, (a merchant called Udākarika) offered seven peas to the Buddha and became King Māndhāta, and someone else threw a handful of sand (in his begging bowl) and became the Dharma King Aśoka. They are the **sacred recipients of gifts**, the **great compassionate ones**, who wish to benefit all sentient beings without any deceit. When it says (in the root text): **Think kindly of me**,[6] this means, "Think intimately with great love of me. I request that you **accept these** offerings **of mine**."

[6] In the Tibetan commentarial text, Khenpo Kunpal switches to 'us' [bdag cag].

inserted root text: stanza 7

bdag ni bsod-nams mi ldan bkren chen te /
mchod-pa'i nor-gzhan bdag la cang-ma-mchis /
des-na gzhan-don dgongs-pa'i mgon gyis ′di /
bdag gi don slad nyid kyi mthus bzhes shig /

[88] de-dag ′bul dgos-pa′i rgyu-mtshan **bdag ni** sngon gyi sbyin-pa la-sogs-pa′i **bsod-nams** dang **mi-ldan**-pas tshe-′dir longs-spyod ′bul bas **bkren-chen** te sprang-po′i nang-nas dbyug-bzung lta-bur ′gyur-pas na **mchod**-par-′os-**pa′i-nor** sngar-bstan-pa de-dag las **gzhan** dngos-su **bdag la** cung-**ma-mchis** te med-pa **des-na** dang-po-thugs-bskyed-pa-nas-bzung-ste rang-′dod-med-par sems-can-thams-cad kyi tshogs-rdzogs shing sgrib-pa-dag na ci-ma-rung snyam-pas **gzhan-don** ′ba′-zhig **dgongs-pa′i mgon**-po rgyal-ba sras-dang-bcas-pa kun-**gyis** bdag-pos-yongs-su-ma-bzung-ba′i-mchod-pa **′di** rnams dngos-′dzin thams-cad dang-bral-bas khyed la phongs-pa mi mnga′ yang **bdag**-cag **gi** tshogs-gnyis-rdzogs shing sgrib-gnyis-dag-pa′i **don**-gyi-**slad**-du **nyid** rnams **kyi** rdzu-′phrul-gyi-**mthus** zhing-khams so-so-nas legs-par **bzhes-shig** ces te

[89] de-ltar rang la ′bul-ba′i nus-pa yod na rgyal-ba-sras-bcas la mkhyen-pa dang brtse-ba′i thabs-mkhas dang rdzu-′phrul bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-pa mnga′-ba lags-pas bzhes-par-mdzad nas bdag-cag gi tshogs-rdzogs shing sgrib-pa-dag-par yang mdzad-par ′gyur zhes gsungs /

inserted root text: stanza 8

rgyal dang de sras rnams la bdag gis ni /
bdag gi lus kun gtan-tu dbul-bar-bgyi /
sems-dpa′-mchog rnams bdag ni yongs bzhes shig /
gus-pas khyed kyi 'bangs-su-mchi-bar-bgyi /

> inserted root text: stanza 7
>
> Not being endowed with merit, I am destitute,
> Having no other riches to offer.
> Therefore, protector, you who care (only) for the welfare of others,
> Accept these (offerings) with (your) powers for my own sake.

[88] The reason why these (offerings) must be presented is that, **not being endowed with merit** (resulting) from former generosity and the like, **I am destitute** of riches to offer in this life; that is to say I have become (as poor as) someone who (lives) among beggars holding a walking stick. Consequently, **having no other riches** that are worthy **to offer**, apart from those (offerings) that were shown previously, (those that have no owner), I actually have nothing at all; I am without anything. **Therefore**, **protector**, the victor and his sons, all of **you who** since the first moment of developing bodhicitta **care** only **for the welfare of others**, and who without any selfishness think, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if all sentient beings gathered the accumulations and purified their obscurations?" **accept** (these offerings) in an excellent way. **These** offerings that do not belong to an owner, I offer to you although, free of any solid grasping,[7] you are not destitute. Accept them **with** your magical **powers** from your individual buddha fields **for my**[8] **own sake**, so that I may perfect my accumulations and purify my obscurations.

[89] If one has the capacity to present offerings in this fashion, it is said that the victor and his sons, being skillful in wisdom and love and endowed with inconceivable supernatural powers, will accept them. Thus we will perfect the accumulations and purify our obscurations.

Offerings of presenting one's body

> inserted root text: stanza 8
>
> To the victor and his sons
> I shall constantly offer all my bodies.
> Supreme heroic beings, please accept me completely;
> I shall be your respectful subject.

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[7] The term *solid grasping* [dngos 'dzin] can also be translated as 'clinging to something as actually existing' [yod par 'dzin pa], 'clinging to something as truly existing' [bden par 'dzin pa].

[8] In the Tibetan commentarial text, Khenpo Kunpal writes 'our' [bdag cag].

[90] gsum-pa ni / bdud bzhi'i g.yul las **rgyal** bas na rgyal ba sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das **dang de** yi **sras** byang chub sems dpa'i tshogs dang bcas pa **rnams la bdag gis ni** da nas bzung ste tshe rabs rnams su **bdag** rang **gi lus** gces shing phangs pa dgos shing mkho ba 'di **kun** dus **gtan** du rgyun mi 'chad par **dbul bar bgyi** yi / **sems dpa' mchog** rgyal sras rigs gsum mgon po sogs khyed **rnams** kyis **bdag ni yongs** su **bzhes shig** ste bzhes nas bdag gir mdzod cig dang / sgu gsum **gus pas khyed** rnams **kyi 'bangs su mchi** ba ste 'ong nas bka' bzhin bsgrub **par bgyi**'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 9
>
> bdag ni khyed kyis yongs-su-bzung-bas na /
> srid na mi 'jigs sems-can phan-par-bgyid /
> sngon gyi sdig-las yang-dag 'da' bgyid cing /
> sdig-pa gzhan yang slan-chad mi bgyid do /

[91] **bdag ni khyed** rnams **kyis yongs-su**-bzhes te bran-gyi-tshul-du rjes-su-**bzung-bas** zhes / bdag gir mdzad **na** khyed rnams thugs-mnyes-par-bgyi-ba'i slad-du **srid**-pa-'khor-bar-gnas **na**-yang gzhan-don-du 'khor-ba'i-sdug-bsngal la **mi-'jigs**-par **sems-can** thams-cad la **phan**-bde'i don-bsgrub-**par-bgyi** zhing /

[92] de-lta-na bdag-nyid mi-dge-ba-spyod-pa'i-sdig-pa dang-ldan na khyed rnams kyi mtshan snyan-grags dbu-'phang la gnod cing gzhan-don lta-ci rang-don yang mi-nus-pas **sngon-gyi-sdig**-pa rnams **las yang-dag**-par **'da'** ste bshags-pa-**bgyid cing sdig-pa gzhan** gang-**yang slan-chad mi bgyid do** zhes sdom-sems-kyis-dam-bca'o // de-ltar lus-'bul-ba ni bsrung-ba rnams kyi mchog yin-par yang gsungs /

[93] gnyis-pa yid-kyi-sprul-pa'i-mchod-pa la / khrus dang sku-phyi sogs 'bul-ba dang / nyer-spyod-kyi-mchod-pa gnyis las /

[94] dang-po ni / zas-kyi-snga-phyir khrus dang rkang-pa-bkru-ba dris-byug-pa me-tog-gi-phreng-bas mgo-la-brgyan-pa la-sogs-pa'i 'jig-rten-pa'i-nyer-spyod dang-mthun-par-mdzad-pa ste / de-yang rgyal-ba-sras-bcas la nyes-pa'i-dri-ma med kyang bdag sogs 'gro-ba'i sgo-gsum-gyi-dri-ma khrus-kyis-sbyang phyir lha la khrus-gsol-ba ste /

[90] Third: **To the victor**, who is triumphant over the four māras, to the Buddha, the Bhagavān, **and his sons**, the assembly of bodhisattvas, **I shall offer** from now on, throughout all (future) lifetimes, **constantly** and unceasingly, **all my bodies**, which I must give up although I cherish them. **Supreme heroic beings**, sons of the victor, such as the 'protectors of the three families', **please accept me completely**. Having accepted me, make me your own, and **I shall be your subject**, **respectful** in body, speech and mind. Having become yours, I shall act according to your teaching.

> inserted root text: stanza 9
>
> When I am completely cared for by you,
> I shall benefit sentient beings without fearing saṃsāric existence;
> I shall perfectly transcend my previous negative deeds
> And furthermore shall not commit wicked deeds in the future.

[91] When **I am completely** accepted and **cared for by you** like a servant, **when** you have made me your own, **I shall** work in order to delight you for the **benefit** and happiness of all **sentient beings**. **Without fearing** the suffering of saṃsāra, I shall work for the benefit of others, even if I must remain in **saṃsāric existence**.

[92] As I am burdened with the negativity of having committed the ten non-virtuous actions, I could damage the fame and glory of your name. Unable to help even myself, it is needless to mention that I cannot benefit others. Therefore, with a resolved mind I make the commitment, "**I shall perfectly transcend my previous negative deeds**. I confess them, **and furthermore** I **shall not commit** any **wicked deeds in the future**." To offer your body in this fashion is said to be the supreme protection.

Offerings that are mentally created

[93] Second, mentally created offerings are of two (types): (1) the offerings of bathing, drying and so forth; and (2) the offerings of enjoyments.

[94] Of these the first is conducted in accordance with the mundane (ancient Indian) offering customs[9] of bathing before and after (eating) food, washing the feet and anointing them with fragrance, or decorating the head with a flower garland. Although the victor and his sons are not stained by defects, in order to cleanse by washing the stains of the three doors of myself and other beings, I offer bathing to the deities.

---

[9] nyer spyod

> inserted root text: stanza 10
>
> khrus-kyi-khang-pa shin-tu dri-zhim-pa /
> shel-gyi-sa-gzhi gsal zhing 'tsher-ba bstar /
> rin-chen 'bar-ba'i ka-ba yid 'ong-ldan /
> mu-tig 'od-chags bla-re bres-pa der /

[95] mdun-gyi-nam-mkhar **khrus-kyi-khang-pa** gcig gam mang-po tsan-dan dang ga-bur la-sogs-pas bsgos-pas **shin-tu dri-zhim-pa** / **shel**-sna-lnga'i-rang-bzhin **gyi sa-gzhi** bkod-pa-phra-chen ltar mdzes-pa dri-ma-med-pas **gsal zhing** 'od-'phro-bas **'tsher-ba** khod-snyoms-pas **bstar**-ba'i bug-pa la them-bus-bcad-pa /

[96] **rin-chen**-sna-bdun nam shel sogs 'od-zer sna-tshogs **'bar-ba'i ka-ba** phyogs-kyi-mdog-can **yid**-du-**'ong**-ba dang-**ldan**-pa bzhi / de'i rtsa-bar 'bo-ra zhes chu-brten-pa'i-ra-ba mi-lang-ba'i-sked-par-sleb-pa dang / sked-par-'phred-du ka-sgrog-bzhi dang steng-skor-kheb-byas-pa la nang-ngos sogs kyi steng-du **mu-tig**-sna-lnga la-sogs-pa'i rin-po-che **'od**-'bar zhing **chags**-pa'i **bla-re** dang 'phen-gdugs rgyal-mtshan ba-dan dra-ba-dang-dra-phyed la-sogs-pas rab-tu-mdzes-par **bres** shing brgyan te de'i-dbus rgya-mthongs kyi steng ka-thung-gis-btegs-pa'i rgya-phib la yid-bzhin-gyi-nor-bu-rin-po-che'i tog-gis-brgyan-pa'i nang-du rin-po-che'i-khri sna-tshogs-pa dang-bcas-par bsgom-**pa** /

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> de-bzhin-gshegs-pa dang de yi sras rnams la /
> rin-chen-bum-pa mang-po spos-kyi-chu /
> yid 'ong legs-par bkang-ba glu dang ni /
> rol-mor bcas-pa du-mas sku-khrus-gsol /

[97] **der** / chos-nyid-de-bzhin-nyid dang rjes-su-mthun-par gshegs-pas **de-bzhin-gshegs**-pa rnams thugs chos-sku'i-dgongs-pa las ma-g.yos-bzhin-du gzugs-sku ye-shes sgyu-ma'i-rnam-rol gang-'dul-gyi-rnam-par **dang** / **de yi sras** byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-'khor-tshogs rgya-mtsho dang-bcas-par byon-pa rnams kyi na-bza' ka-sgrog gi steng-du bkal te /

> inserted root text: stanza 10
>
> (In) very sweetly scented bathing pavilions
> (With) luminous and sparkling, level crystal floors,
> Endowed with exquisite pillars ablaze with gems,
> Aglow with pearls, canopies are hanging; there

[95] I visualize in the sky before me one or many **bathing pavilions**, **very sweetly scented**, being sprinkled with sandalwood, camphor and the like. The design of the **floors**, made of five kinds of **crystal**, is like a great mosaic, beautiful and immaculate. Therefore, they are **luminous. And**, radiating light, they are **sparkling**. Being even, they are **level**, their drains sealed with plugs.

[96] Four **pillars**, made of the seven kinds of **gems** or crystals, are **ablaze with** various light rays, **endowed with exquisite** colors on the sides. At the base is what is called 'a bathtub wall', a wall that holds the water, as high as the waist of a standing man. Four railings run between (the pillars). Up above, a ceiling covers[10] (the bathing pavilions). In the upper part of the interior **canopies** made of precious substances, such as the five kinds of **pearls**, radiating and **aglow**, as well as pillar banners, parasols, victory banners, streamers, strings, string pendants, and so forth are most beautifully decorated and **hanging**. In the center (above the opening in the ceiling), is a square cupola on top of which short pillars support a Chinese roof, ornamented with a wish-fulfilling jewel as the top-piece. Inside (the bathing pavilions) are jewel thrones.

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> I offer bathing to the tathāgatas and their sons
> With many precious vases,
> Properly filled with pleasant scented water,
> Accompanied by various songs and music.

[97] **There** arrive **the tathāgatas**, those who traverse in harmony with the natural state as it (actually) is. Although their minds do not depart from the dharmakāya, they come as the rūpakāya, the illusory wisdom display, the form that tames whoever (needs taming). They arrive together with **their sons**, the ocean-like assembly of an entourage of bodhisattvas, and hang their clothes over the railings.

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[10] skor kheb byas pa

[98] rang ngam sprul-pa'i-mchod-lha rnams kyis khrus-ras dkar-po sku-sha-mi-sgrib-pa phul te mnab-pa la vaiḍūrya la-sogs-pa'i **rin-chen-bum-pa** che zhing mdzes-pa **mang po** dag-byed-kyi-rdzas dang dri-bzang sna-tshogs-pa'i **spos-kyi-chu yid**-du-**'ong**-bas sum-gnyis **legs-par-bkang-ba** yo-ba'i-tshul-gyis dbang-khrus-byas-pa dang chab-gcig khrus-khang gi phyi-rol 'od-kyi-'dod-snam gyi steng-du mchod-pa'i-lha-mo mdzes shing blta-na-sdug-pa rnams kyis la las / gang-tshe rkang-gnyis-gtso-bo sogs yid-'phrog-pa'i bstod pa'i glu-dbyangs snyan-pa **dang ni** la las rnga-zlum gling-bu la-sogs-pa'i **rol-mor bcas-pa du-mas sku-khrus-gsol**-bar-bgyi'o //

[99] de-nas khrus-khang gi them-bu-blangs-ba na khrus-chu nam-mkha' nas bab-pas 'og-tu 'khod-pa'i rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi sdig-sgrib ma-lus-pa dag-pa dang / khyad-par yul-lha gzhi-bdag 'dre-srin nad-bdag sogs kyi gnod-'tshe'i bsam-sbyor gdug-rtsub ma-lus-pa zhi zhing mi-nad dang phyugs-nad rgyun-chad / rin-chen-byang-chub-kyi-sems rgyud-la-skyes-par bsam /

> inserted root text: stanza 12
>
> de-dag sku la mtshungs-pa-med-pa'i gos /
> gtsang la dri rab-bsgos-pas sku-phyi'o /
> de-nas de la kha-dog legs bsgyur-ba'i /
> na-bza' shin-tu dri-zhim dam-pa 'bul /

[100] khrus-gsol-ba'i rgyal-ba-sras-bcas **de-dag** gi **sku la** lha'i-gos dang ka-shi-ka la-sogs-pa **mtshungs-pa-med-pa'i-gos** dri-ma-med-pas **gtsang la dri**-shin-tu-zhim-po'i sman-phye-skam-pos **rab-tu-bsgos-pas sku-phyi** zhing byi-dor legs-par-bgyi'**o** //

[101] na-bza' khrus-ras sku-phyi kun 'od-dmar-po'i-rnam-par byin-rlabs dang dngos-grub-kyi-thsul-du rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi smin-mtshams su thim-pas de-dag gi ye-shes yon-tan thams-cad thob-par bsam mo //

[102] sku-phyis-pa'i rjes **de-nas** yul-dam-pa **de** rnams las sprul-sku chags-bral-gyi-rnam-pa rab-byung-gi-cha-byad-can rnams **la** / sngon-po btsag dang ngur-smrig rtsi // zhes-pas / rung-ba'i-tshon-gsum gyis **kha-dog legs**-par-**bsgyur-ba'i na-bza'** chos-gos-gsum la-sogs-pa'i 'tsho-ba'i-yo-byad-bcu-gsum-po **shin-tu-dri-zhim** gyis bsgos-pa'i gos 'bum-phrag ri-ba'i **dam-pa 'bul**-bar-bya zhing /

[98] Either you or emanated offering goddesses offer white transparent bathing garments, clothe them, and bestow the bathing empowerment by pouring **many** large, beautiful **precious vases**, made out of beryl and the like, **properly filled** to two thirds **with** cleansing substances and **pleasant water, scented** with various aromas. At the same time, outside the bathing pavilions, on platforms made of light, are beautiful and delightful offering goddesses. Some offer lovely and melodious songs, praising (the Buddha) with, "At the time when the supreme one among humans was born…" and the like. Some play round drums, oboes and so forth. **I** thus **offer bathing**, **accompanied by various kinds of music**.

[99] Then, when the plugs of the bathing pavilions are drawn, imagine that the bathing waters rain down from the sky and purify the negative deeds and obscurations of all sentient beings, yourself and others, who are seated beneath (the pavilions). In particular consider that all malicious and harmful intentions of regional deities, local spirits, demons, spirits, disease-causing demons and so forth, are pacified; that diseases of humans and animals come to an end; and the precious bodhicitta is born in the minds (of all).

> inserted root text: stanza 12
>
> I dry their bodies with incomparable cloths,
> Clean and well-powdered with scent,
> And then I present them excellent things,
> Garments of colors well-dyed, (powdered with) most sublime sweet-smelling fragrance.

[100] Having bathed the victors and their sons, **I dry their bodies with incomparable cloths**, such as the cloth of the gods, Benares silk, and so forth. As (the cloths) are free of stain, they are **clean**. They are **well-powdered** with the very sweet **scent** of dry medicinal powder.

[101] Imagine that all their clothes, bathing garments and towels dissolve as blessings and accomplishments in the form of red light into the space between the eyebrows of all sentient beings, yourself and others. Imagine that through this all receive the wisdom and qualities of these (sublime beings).

[102] **Then**, after the offering of bathing, **I present** the nirmāṇakāyas—those manifestations free from passion who wear the attire of the ordained ones, **these s**ublime ones—the thirteen possessions of (ordained) livelihood such as the three-fold robes and others. (I present) **excellent things**, numbering hundreds of thousands of garments, powdered with **the most sublime sweet-smelling fragrance**, **garments of colors well-dyed** with the three proper dyes, as (the texts) say: "blue, red-ocher and saffron dye."

> inserted root text: stanza 13
>
> gos-bzang srab la 'jam-pa sna-tshogs dang /
> rgyan-mchog brgya-phrag de dang de-dag gis /
> 'phags-pa kun-tu-bzang dang 'jam-dbyangs dang /
> 'jig-rten-dbang-phyug sogs la'ang brgyan-par-bgyi /

[103] longs-sku sogs chags-can 'khor-los-bsgyur-ba'i-cha-byad-can rnams la lha-rdzas las grub-pa'i **gos-bzang**-po rin-thang-dang-bral-bar shin-tu-**srab** cing yang **la** reg-bya-**'jam-pa** kha-dog dang dbyibs **sna-tshogs**-pa'i gos lus la bsam-gtan-gyi-bde-ba bskyed-nus-pa'i gar-gyi-phu-dung / dar-dkar-po-gser-gyi-ngang-ris-can-gyi-stod-g.yogs / tshi-gu'i-smad-dkris / dar-sna-tshogs-kyi-cod-paṇ / zi-ldir ste dar-gyi-chas-gos-lnga dang / gar-gyi-phu-dung gi tshab tu dar-dpyang bgrang-ba'ang yod // de-ltar phul-ba des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi ngo-tsha dang khrel-yod kyi gos thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam-par-bya'o //

[104] rgyan-gyi-rnam-pa gser la-sogs-pa vaiḍūrya sogs kyi phra-tshom-gyis-spras-pa'i-dbu-rgyan / snyan-rgyan / mgul-rgyal/ do-shal / se-mo-do // phyag-gdub / zhabs-gdub / sku-rag ste rin-po-che'i-**rgyan**-brgyad-po ches **mchog**-tu-gyur-pa **brgya-phrag**-mang-po **de-dang-de-dag-gis 'phags**-mchog-dam-**pa kun-tu-bzang**-po **dang 'jam**-pa'i-**dbyangs dang 'jig-rten-dbang-phyug**-spyan-ras-gzigs dang **sogs**-sgras phyag-na-rdo-rje dang sa-yi-snying-po byams-pa nam-snying sgrib-sel sogs **la'lang brgyan-par-bgyi** zhing 'bul-bar-bya'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi mtshan-dpe'i-rgyan-bzang thob-par-shog-cig bsam-par-bya'o //

[105] gnyis-pa ni / mdzod las /

gling-bzhi dang ni nyi-zla dang //
ri-rab dang ni 'dod-lha dang //
tshangs-pa'i-'jig-rten stong la ni //
stong ni spyi-phud yin-par 'dod //
de stong la ni stong-gnyis-pa //
bar-ma'i-'jig-rten-khams zhes-bya //
de stong la ni stong-gsum mo //

zhes-pas

> inserted root text: stanza 13
>
> With each and every one (of the many) hundreds of excellent ornaments
> And various noble garments, fine and smooth,
> I adorn the noble Samantabhadra, Mañjughoṣa,
> Lokeśvara and others.

[103] I present the saṃbhogakāya, (those manifestations) with passion who wear the attire of a world monarch, priceless **noble garments** made of celestial substances, which are very **fine**, light and **smooth** to the touch. Clothes in **various** colors and shapes, such as the five silk garments: (1) the dance jacket that has the power to ignite the bliss of meditation in the body; (2) the top with golden design; (3) the multi-colored leggings; (4) the tiara made of various kinds of silk; and (5) ribbons. A silk shawl can also be substituted for the dance jacket. While offering in this way, think, "May all beings, myself and others, obtain the garment of shame and embarrasment."

[104] **I adorn** and I present **the noble**, supreme and sublime ones, led by **Samantabhadra**, **Mañjughoṣa**, **Lokeśvara** Avalokita **and others**, meaning Vajrapāṇi, Kṣitigarbha, Maitreya, Ākāśagarbha, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī, and the like, **with each and every one** of the many **hundreds of** ornaments, among which the most **excellent** are the eight precious **ornaments**, those being the jewel crown ornamented with clusters of beryl and the like, the earrings, the throat ornament, the long necklace, the short necklace, the bracelets, the anklets, and the belt. Thus think, "May all sentient beings, myself and others, attain through these (offerings) the excellent ornamentation of the major marks and minor signs."

Offerings of enjoyment

[105] Second, as it is said in the *Abhidharma-koṣa*:[11]

> A thousand of the four continents with sun and moon,
> (Mount) Sumeru, the worlds of the gods of desire
> And of Brahma,
> That thousand is counted as the 'first order of a thousand world systems'.
> A thousand of this ('first order of a thousand world systems') is called the 'second order of thousand (world systems)',
> Or the 'middle order of a thousand world systems'.
> A thousand of this ('middle order of a thousand world systems') is the 'third order of thousand (world systems)'.

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[11] pages 27-28

> inserted root text: stanza 14
>
> stong-gsum kun-tu dri-ngad ldang-ba yi /
> dri-mchog rnams kyis thub-dbang kun gyi sku /
> gser-sbyangs btso-ma byi-dor-byas-pa ltar /
> 'od-chags 'bar-ba de-dag byug-par-bgyi /

[106] **stong-gsum**-gyi-stong-chen-po'i-'jig-rten-gyi-khams mtha'-yas-pa **kun-du dri-**zhim-po'i **ngad** rab-tu-**ldang**-ba'am 'phro-ba yi tsan-dan-dkar-po la-sogs-pa bsil zhing **dri-mchog**-bzang-po rnams kyi chus rin-po-che'i-snod dung-phor dang nya-phyi'i la-sogs bkang-ba de mchod-lha **rnams kyis thub**-pa'i-**dbang**-po sangs-rgyas byang-chub-sems-dpa' **kun gyi sku gser**-bzang-po lan-grangs-bcu-drug gi bar-du legs-par bzhu-btul-gyis-**sbyangs** te **btso-ma** ste shin-tu-dag-pa sman sna-tshogs kyis mdangs-bton cing dar-gos kyis **byi-dor-byas-pa ltar 'od**-rang-ngor-**chags** shing gzhan-ngor 'phro-bas **'bar-ba de-dag** la rdul mi 'byung-ba'i ched-du **byugs-par-bgyi**'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi pags-pa gser-mdog lta-bu'i mtshan-bzang thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> thub-dbang mchod-gnas mchog la yid-'ong-ba'i /
> me-tog man-da-ra dang pad-ma dang /
> ut-pal la-sogs dri-zhim thams-cad dang /
> phreng-ba spel-legs yid-'ong rnams kyis mchod /

[107] **thub**-pa'i-**dbang**-po mchod-par-bya-ba'i-**gnas mchog**-tu-gyur-pa rnams **la** kha-dog dbyibs legs **yid**-du-**'ong**-ba'i lha'i-**me-tog-manda-ra**-ba **dang** / lha dang mi'i-yul gyi me-tog **padma dang utpal la**-sogs-pa lha-klu-mi dang dag-pa'i-zhing gi **dri-zhim** zhing 'od-zer-'phro-ba'i me-tog **thams-cad** sil-ma nam-mkhar-gtor-bas sprul-sku-chags-bral-gyi-rnam-pa-can rnams la khang-bzang dang bla-re 'phen-gdugs rgyal-mtshan maṇḍal la-sogs-pa'i rnam-pa **dang** de las **kyang** me-tog-gi-char-dbab-pa rlung-gis-bskyod-pas phyogs-bcu'i-rgyal-ba rnams la'ang mchod-par-gyur-pa dang / me-tog-sna-lnga'i **phreng-ba**-phreng-brgyud-mkhas-pas-byas-pa ltar **spel-legs**-par-brgyus-pas **yid**-du-**'ong**-ba **rnams kyis** kyang longs-sku-chags-can-gyi-rnam-pa-can rnams la phreng-ba la-sogs-pa rgyan-rnam-pa-sna-tshogs-pas **mchod**-par-bya'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi rgyud la byang-chub-yan-lag-bdun gyi me-tog-gi-tshom-bu bkra-bar-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 14
>
> Just like polishing cleaned and refined gold,
> I anoint the bodies of all lords of the sages with supreme perfumes
> Of scented fragrances permeating all 'third order of a thousand (world systems)'.
> So that they glow and sparkle in their luster.

[106] **Just like polishing** with a silk cloth excellent **gold** that has been **cleaned**, **refined** and intensely purified by melting it well sixteen times and enhancing its shine through various kinds of chemicals, **I anoint the bodies of all lords of the sages**, the buddhas and bodhisattvas **with** waters presented by offering goddesses—waters of cooling, noble and **supreme perfumes**, such as white sandalwood, that fill precious vessels, such as conch shells, oyster shells and the like, and from which sweet-**scented fragrances** widely **permeating** and spreading in **all** limitless **'third order**, the larger order, **of one thousand** world systems'. (I anoint them) **so that in their luster they glow** for themselves and radiating, **sparkle** for others, and so that dust never settles on their (bodies). Think, "May all sentient beings, myself and others, achieve the noble mark of golden-hued skin."

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> To the lords of the sages, the supreme objects for offerings,
> I offer every (variety of) beautiful flowers, sweetly fragrant,
> Such as māndāravā-flower, lotus, utpal and others
> As well as beautiful, well-arranged garlands.

[107] **To** the **lords of the sages**, to all **supreme objects for** receiving **offerings**, **I offer** the divine **māndāravā-flower**, **beautiful** in excellent color and shape, the flowers of the realms of both gods and humans, such as the **lotus, utpal and others,** as well as **every** (variety of) **flowers** of gods, nāgas, humans and pure buddha fields, **sweetly fragrant** and emitting rays of light, whose petals, when tossed into the sky, take on the forms of beautiful houses, canopies, pillar banners, parasols, victory banners, maṇḍalas and so forth, (offerings) for the nirmāṇakāya, those manifestations free of passion. And again from these (offerings) a rain of flowers descends, blown by the wind and becoming an offering to the victors in the ten directions. With **beautiful** and **well-arranged garlands** of five kinds of flowers, just like those made by skillful mala stringers, I offer various forms of ornaments such as garlands and so forth, to the saṃbhogakāya, those manifestations with passion. Think, "Through this (offering) may the flower heaps of the seven factors of enlightenment bloom in the minds of all sentient beings, myself and others."

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> spos-mchog yid-'phrog dri-ngad khyab-pa yi /
> bdug-pa'i sprin-tshogs rnams kyang de la 'bul /
> zhal-zas bza'-btung sna-tshogs bcas-pa yi /
> lha-bshol rnams kyang de la dbul-bar-bgyi /

[108] tsan-dan-sbrul-snying dang a-ka-ru-nag-po la-sogs-pa'i lhan-skyes-dang-sbyar-byung-gi-**spos mchog**-tu-gyur-pa tshor-ma-thag-tu **yid-'phrog**-par-byed-pa'i **dri**-zhim-po'i **ngad** phyogs thams-cad du **khyab** cing ldangs-**pa yi bdug**-pa-rengs-bu dang spos-phor sogs su bsreg-**pa'i** du-ba **sprin**-gyi-**tshogs** ltar 'khrigs-pa yig-'bru dang rin-po-che-sna-bdun gyi rnam-pa rlung gis phyogs bcur bskyod-pa **rnams** kyis **kyang** rgyal-ba-sras-dang-bcas-pa **de**-dag **la** gus-pas **dbul**-bas dgyes-pa-bskyed cing / dri des sems-can rnams kyi sdug-bsngal-bsal te bde-bas-tshim-par-byas-pa dang / des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi rgyud la rgyal-ba-dgyes-pa'i-tshul-khrims kyi dri-bsung gis khyab-par-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

[109] **zhal-zas** ro-brgya-dang-ldan pa'i 'bras-chen la-sogs-pa'i **bza'**-ba dang bca'-ba / bdud-brtsi'i-**btung**-ba dang dkar-gsum mngar-gsum la-sogs-pa kha-dog dang dri-ro phun-sum-tshogs-pa **sna-tshogs**-pa dang-**bcas-pa yi** lha-rdzas las grub-pa'i bshos sam / lha zhes rgyal-po ste / de'i zhal-du-bza'-bar-'os-pa'i **lha-bshos** / chu-ma-rag-pa'i-zhal-zas la-sogs-pa mang-po mdor-na rin-po-che'i lhung-bzed dang ka-to-ra sogs su yid-la-gang-'dod kyi bza'-btung sna-tshogs-pa **rnams kyang de-dag la dbul-bar-bgyi**'o // des rang-bzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi ting-nge-'dzin-gyi-zas-mchog thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> gser gyi pad-ma tshar-du-dngar-ba yi /
> rin-chen sgron-me rnams kyang dbul-bar-bgyi /
> sa-gzhi bstar-ba spos kyis byugs-pa der /
> me-tog yid-'ong sil-ma dkram-par-bgyi /

[110] 'dzam-bu'i-chu-**gser gyi padma** mdzes shing yid-du-'ong-ba mang-po gral-**tshar-du-dngar-ba** ste sgrigs-legs-pa **yi** pad-spungs su / vaiḍūrya la-sogs-pa'i **rin-chen** sna-tshogs kyi **sgron-me** 'od kyis 'dzam-bu'i-gling sogs khyab cing nyin-mtshan rtag-tu snang-bar-byed-pa dang /

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> I also offer (the victors and their sons) cloud banks of incense that spreads
> A supreme scent of sweet fragrance, captivating the mind;
> And I present them royal delicacies,
> Including a variety of food and drink.

[108] (I also offer) the fragrance of **incense**, burning incense sticks or incense powder in pots, **that spreads** and permeates throughout all directions a **supreme scent**, natural and manufactured, such as sandalwood (called) gośīrṣa-uragasāra-candana, black agaru and the like, a **sweet-**smelling **fragrance, captivating the mind** the moment it is noticed. Arranged like **cloud banks**, (the smoke) manifests in the form of letters and the seven precious substances, blown by the wind into the ten directions. I **also** respectfully **offer** these to the victors and their sons, and they are delighted. Think, "Through this scent may the suffering of beings be removed, may they be blissfully satisfied; and through this (offering) may the fragrance of discipline, in which the victors delight, permeate the minds of myself and all beings."

[109] **I** also **present them food** and appetizers, like the magnificent rice endowed with one hundred flavors, nectar-like **drink**, delicacies composed of divine substances, **including a variety** of things of perfect color, smell and taste, such as the three white and the three sweet substances; a multitude of offerings, such as food, (cooked in) water that has not been touched. (Note: In the word 'divine delicacy') divine means royal. **Royal delicacies** are foods that are worthy of the mouth of a king. In short, (I offer) a variety of food and drink, all that the heart can desire, (pouring them) into their precious begging bowls and plates. Think, "Through this (offering) may all sentient beings, myself and others, obtain the supreme food of samādhi."

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> I offer precious lamps
> Arranged in rows upon golden lotuses;
> On a level floor anointed with perfume,
> I scatter petals of lovely flower blossoms.

[110] Upon heaps of lotuses, (all) well-placed and **arranged in rows**, **upon** a multitude of beautiful and exquisite **golden lotuses** of the highest quality, **I offer** mentally-created (butter) **lamps** of various kinds of **precious** substances such as beryl and others, the light of which pervades Jambudvīpa and other (realms), illuminating them day and night.

[111] rang-rang-gi-phul-ba la yang kong-bu ni stong-gsum-gyi-stong-chen-po // sdong-bu ni ri'i-rgyal-po-ri-rab / mar-khu ni rgya-mtsho chen-po tsam la 'od-sna-lngas nam-mkha'i-khams thams-cad khyab-par-byed-pa **rnams kyang** yid-kyis-sprul te de-dag la **'bul-bar-bgyi**'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad shes-bya la rmongs-pa'i ma-rig-pa'i mun-pa thams-cad bsal te shes-bya thams-cad mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes-kyi-snang-ba chen-po thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

[112] rin-po-che sna-tshogs kyis **sa-gzhi** mig-mang-ris su bkra-ba khod-snyoms-pas **bstar-ba** mnan na nems-pa btegs na 'phar-ba la dri-zhim sna-tshogs-pa'i **spos**-chu ba-lang-gi-ko-ba'i srab-mthug-tsam **kyis byugs-pa der me-tog yid**-du-**'ong**-ba kha-dog sna-tshogs-pa **sil-ma** ste yu-ba-med-pa mi-'greng-tsam-du bcal du **dkram** zhing bkod-pa yang mchod-**par-bgyi**'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi 'dun-pa sa lta-bu'i sems-bskyed -thob-par-shog cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> gzhal-med pho-brang bstod-dbyangs yid-'ong-ldan /
> mu-tig rin-chen rgyan-'phyang mdzes 'bar-ba /
> dpag-yas nam-mkha'i rgyan-gyur de-dag kyang /
> thugs-rje'i-rang-bzhin-can la dbul-bar-bgyi /

[113] rgya-khyon dang bkod-pa'i tshad blos-**gzhal**-du-**med**-pa'i **pho-brang** rin-po-che sna-tshogs las grub-pa brtsegs lnga-brgya-pa la-sogs-pa'i nang dang 'dod-snam thams-cad mchod-pa'i-lha-mo rnams kyis pi-vang la-sogs-pa'i rol-mo dang-bcas-pas **bstod**-pa'i-**dbyangs yid-**du-**'ong**-ba'i snyan-pa sgrogs-pa dang-**ldan**-pa'i phyi'i-gsham sne dang nang-gi ka-ba sogs-la seng-ge dang chu-srin sogs kyi kha-nas-dpyang-ba'i **mu-tig** dmar-po dang **rin-chen** sna-tshogs-pa'i drva-ba-dang-drva-phyed la-sogs-pa'i **rgyan**-gyi-chun-po 'phyang-bas **mdzes** shing yid-du-'ong-ba 'od dang 'od-zer **'bar-ba** drva-ba'i-khug-mgo dang drva-phyed-kyi-sne la rnga-yab dang dril-bu dang me-long gis brgyan-pa / me-long-gi-ngos dang dril-bu'i-sgras byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa ston-pa /

[114] tsan-dan gyi va-kha nas dri-bzang gi chu-rgyun-bab-pas khrus-kyi-rdzing-bu 'khyil-ba la chu-bya sna-tshogs skad-snyan-sgrogs shing rtse-ba / nang-gi-khang-mig la-lar na-bza' sna-tshogs dang / la-lar bza'-btung sna-tshogs / nyin-mor bzhugs-khri dang mtshan gyi gzim-cha lha'i-ras bcos-bu sna-tshogs kyi stan dang sngas khra-bo sogs nye-ba'i-rin-po-che-sna-bdun dang /

[111] Offered one by one, the bowls (of the lamps) are as wide as a 'thousand-cubed great thousand',[12] the wicks as large as Mount Sumeru, and the melted butter as vast as an ocean. Their five kinds of light pervade the entire extent of space. Think, "Through this (offering), the darkness of the dull ignorance of all sentient beings, myself and others, is dispelled, and we obtain the great wisdom illumination of knowing all fields of knowledge."

[112] The **floor**, composed of various precious jewels, beautiful in checkered designs, is **level**, its surface being even. When pressed down upon it yields, and when pushed up it rises. (This floor) is **anointed** with various sweet, fragrant **perfumes**, (layered) as thick as cowhide. **On** it **I scatter**, arrange and offer **petals** of multi-colored, **lovely flower blossoms**, which lie flat on the ground and, having no stems, do not stick up. Think, "Through this (offering) may all sentient beings, myself and others, achieve bodhicitta with an intent (as firm) as the earth."

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> To those who have the nature of compassion
> I offer also these unfathomable palaces endowed with beautiful melodies of praise,
> Exquisitely radiating, bedecked with ornaments of pearls and gems,
> Serving as an adornment for immeasurable space.

[113] (I offer) **palaces unfathomable** to the mind in their spaciousness and dimensions of design, composed of various jewels, **endowed with** five hundred floors and the like. Inside and on every balcony, offering goddesses sing songs and **beautiful melodies of praise**, accompanied by musical instruments like the tambura. The pillars and so forth on the outside and on the inside (of the palaces) are **bedecked with** clusters of **ornaments**, such as strings and string pendants of various kinds **of gems** and red **pearls**, hanging from the mouths of lions and water monsters, **exquisitely** and splendidly **radiating** with a hundred thousand colors and light rays. The top point of the strings and the tips of the string pendants are adorned with fans, bells and mirrors. On the surface of the mirrors and through the sound of the bells, the conduct of the bodhisattvas is taught.

[114] (I offer) a stream of scented water descending from sandalwood spouts (at the corners of the roof), filling bathing ponds in which frolic various kinds of water birds, chirping with melodious voices. Some inner rooms (hold) various garments and others various kinds of food and drink. During the day there are seats and at night bedding. There are cushions and multi-colored pillows of various manufactured divine fabrics and others of the seven secondary precious things.

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12 A 'thousand-cubed great-thousand-world' [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ] or the 'third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra] is a trichiliocosm—one billion single word systems.

[115] rin-po-che sna-tshogs-pa'i sgron-me'i 'od kyis phyogs thams-cad nyin-mtshan-kun-du gsal zhing tshad blos-**dpag**-tu-**med** cing mtha'-yas-pa nam-mkha'i-khams thams-cad khyab-pas **nam-mkha'i-rgyan** lta-bur **gyur**-pa **de-dag kyang** // **thugs-snying-rje'i-rang-bzhin-can** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das sras byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs dang-bcas-pa rnams **la 'bul-bar-bgyi**'o // des rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi thar-pa-chen-po'i-grong-khyer thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam mo //

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> rin chen gdugs mdzes gser gyi yu ba can /
> khor yug rgyan gyi rnam pa yid 'ong brgyan /
> dbyibs legs lta na sdug pa bsgreng ba yang /
> rtag tu thub dbang rnams la dbul bar bgyi /

[116] lha-rdzas-kyi-dar dang **rin-chen** sna-tshogs-pa'i **gdugs** rab-tu-**mdzes**-pa **gser-gyi-yu-ba-can khor-yug** ste sham-bu la mu-tig la-sogs-pa'i **rgyan-gyi-rnam-pa** dpal-be'u dang drva-ba-dang-drva-phyed la-sogs-pa **yid**-du-**'ong**-bas **brgyan**-pa **dbyibs** shin-tu-**legs shing blta-na-sdug-pa bsgreng-ba** ste gyen-du-bslang-ba **yang** mchod-pa'i-lha-mo dang rta-cang-shes dang glang-po-che sogs kyis bzung-ba sngon ston-pa-thugs-rje-can la g.yas-phyogs-nas tshangs-bas vaiḍūrya'i-gdugs lnga-brgya dang g.yon-phyogs-nas brgya-byin gyis 'dzam-bu'i-chu-gser-gyi-gdugs lnga-brgya phul-ba ltar dus-**rtag-tu thub**-pa'i-**dbang-**po sras-dang-bcas-pa **rnams la dbul-bar-bgyi**'o //de-ltar phul-bas rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad 'khor-ba dang ngan-song-gi-tsha-gdung las skyob ste / dkon-mchog-gsum gyi grib-ma-bsil-ba'i skyabs-'og-tu-tshud-par-shog-cig ces bsam-par-bya'o //

[117] de-ltar yid-sprul-gyi-mchod-pa'i-rnam-grangs-bcu-gnyis-po 'di rnams la / rang-re'i-blos stong-gsum sogs khyab-par-mi-nus-pas na de-ltar khyab yod-par bsam dgos so // de-la zhi-ba-lha shin-tu-spros-med-kyi-rnal-'byor-pa yin-pas dngos-'byor-gyi-mchod-pa rgya-chen ma gsung-par 'di-ltar dka'-tshegs-med-par bsod-nams-kyi-tshogs rgya-chen-po yang-dag-par-rdzogs-pa'i thabs mchog-tu-gyur-pas na byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-thabs-la-mkhas-pa'i-mchod-pa yin la / des-na mchod-pa'i-rnam-grangs 'di rnams rtsis-med-mi-byed-par yang-dang-yang-du bsgom dgos //

[118] de'ang lha-bsgom-pa lta-bu rgyun-mi-'chad-par bsgom mi dgos-par skad-cig-yud-tsam-yud-tsam blo-la-snang-tsam-snang-tsam shar-ba-tsam-gyis dka'-tshegs-dang-ngal-dub-ma-dgos-par bsod-nams-kyi-tshogs rgya-chen-po 'dum-par-'gyur-bas

[115] Day and night and in all directions the light of lamps (fashioned) from various precious substances illuminates and pervades the entire extent of boundless space, which is mentally **unfathomable,** thus **serving as an adornment for immeasurable space**. **I offer also** (all) **these to** the buddhas, including the sons of the Bhagavān, the host of bodhisattvas, (all) **those who have the nature of compassion**. Think, "Through this (offering), may all sentient beings, myself and others, reach the city of liberation."

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> I constantly offer to the lords of the sages
> Precious and lovely parasols with golden handles
> And exquisite ornamental designs embellishing the rims.
> Hoisted, their excellent shapes are beautiful to behold.

[116] Just as in former times Brahmā presented five hundred beryl parasols from the right of our gracious teacher, and Śakra five hundred parasols of the finest gold from his left, **I constantly offer to the lord of the sages** and his sons, the most **lovely parasols** made of divine silks and various **precious** substances, **with golden handles and exquisite ornamental designs**—such as the endless knot, strings, string pendants and the like—fashioned out of pearls, **embellishing** the fringes of **the rims**. (The parasols are fashioned in) the most **excellent shapes**, **beautiful to behold**, (and are) **hoisted** or raised up and carried by offering goddesses, magical horses, elephants and other (animals). Think, "As I offer in this way, may all sentient beings, myself and others, be saved from the anguish of saṃsāra and the lower realms, and may we be put under the protective and cooling shade of the three jewels."

[117] If you cannot fully encompass with your mind 'the third order of a thousand (world systems')[13] and the like in regard to these twelve kinds of mentally-created offerings, then you should just visualize as much as you can. As Śāntideva was a yogin of utmost simplicity, he did not teach extensively on the offerings that are physically assembled. But because (he taught) a supreme method for completely perfecting vast accumulations of merit without any hardship, this is the offering of the bodhisattvas skilled in means. Therefore, you should visualize again and again these enumerations of offerings without belittling them.

[118] For this (practice) one need not visualize (the offerings) continuously as when visualizing a deity. Instead, without hardship or difficulty, one gathers vast accumulations of merit by repeatedly bringing them to mind for short moments.

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[13] The 'third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra] is a trichiliocosm—one billion single word systems.

[119] tshogs-rdzogs shing sgrib-pa-dag nas byang-chub-kyi-sems rgyud-la-skye-ba dang / thos-pa-shes shing mi-brjed-par-'gyur-ba la-sogs-pa'i yon-tan thams-cad 'byung-bas don-chen-po tshegs-chung-ngus 'grub pa'i mchod-pa'i rnam-grangs 'di rnams yang-yang bsam zhing mchod na log-'tsho-dang-sdig-pas-bsgrub-pa'i-mchod-pa nga-rgyal-dang-ngom-chos-su-'gro-ba ci-tsam phul-ba las kyang mchod-pa rgya-che zhing rnam-par-dag-pa yin-par gsungs //

> inserted root text: stanza 20
>
> de las gzhan yang mchod-pa'i-tshogs
> rol-mo dbyangs snyan yid'ong-ldan /
> sems-can sdug-bsngal sim-byed-pa'i /
> sprin rnams so-sor gnas-gyur-cig /

[120] gsum-pa smon-lam-stobs-kyi-mchod-pa ni / gong-du-bshad-pa **de-dag las gzhan-yang** khyad-par-du-'phags-pa'i **mchod-pa'i-tshogs** sil-snyan-yan-lag-brgyad-ldan la-sogs-pa'i 'bud-rdung-dkrol-gsum-gyi-**rol-mo** dang / mi'am-ci'i-sdong-po'i-sgra-snyan-gyi-skad 'od-srung-chen-pos ma-bzod-par gar-'chams-pa lta-bu dang / dri-za'i-rgyal-po-rab-dga'i-tam-bu-ra'i-rgyud-bsgreng-ba lta-bu gar dang-bcas-pa'i bstod-pa'i-glu **dbyangs-snyan-**pa **yid**-du-**'ong**-ba dang-**ldan**-pa gang-zhig nus-pa'i-khyad-par thos-pa-tsam-kyis **sems-can** gyi **sdug-bsngal**-sel zhing **sim**-pa'i dgar-bde thob-par-**byed-pa'i sprin** zhes-pa khyab-che-ba'i-don-yin-pas phyogs-bcu'i-zhing khyab-par-byed-pa'i sgra-dbyangs dpag-tu-med-pa **rnams** rgyal-ba-sras-bcas kyi spyan-sngar 'byung zhing rgyun-mi-'chad-par rtag-tu **so-sor-gnas**-pa-**gyur-cig** ces smon-pa dang /

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> dam-chos dkon-mchog thams-cad dang /
> mchod-rten rnams dang sku-gzugs la /
> rin-chen me-tog la-sogs char /
> rgyun-mi-'chad-par 'bab-par-shog /

[119] Through this, all qualities will arise including the perfection of the accumulations, the purification of obscurations, the birth of bodhicitta in one's mind, the understanding of what one has studied without forgetting it, and so forth. Therefore, thinking again and again about these enumerated offerings through which one accomplishes great benefit with little hardship, and offering them, is said to be a more vast and pure offering than (material) offerings one might present which were acquired through wrong livelihood and negative deeds, or which serve only arrogance and pretentiousness.

Offerings (made) through the power of aspirations

> inserted root text: stanza 20
>
> In addition, may masses of offerings
> Endowed with sweet and pleasing melodies of musical instruments
> Each remain as (offering) clouds,
> Soothing the misery of beings.

[120] Third, offerings (made) through the power of aspirations: **In addition** to what has been explained above, **may masses of** the most exalted **offerings**, **endowed with** beautiful, **sweet and pleasing melodies** of praise—like (the sounds) **of musical instruments** that are blown, beaten or rung, such as cymbals endowed with eight qualities and so forth, or like the sound of the lute (played) by Druma-kiṃnara that even Mahākāśyapa could not resist and began dancing to, or (sounds) like strumming the strings of the tambura of the gandharva king, Supriya,[14] accompanied by dances—(may) all these immeasurable, melodious sounds which pervade all the buddha fields of the ten directions, distinguished in their power, (manifest as offering) **clouds,** dispelling and **soothing the misery of beings**, and making them attain happiness merely by hearing them. (The word) '**clouds**' connotes 'very vast'. **May each remain** and appear continuously, without interruption, before the victors and their sons. Thus pray.

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> May a rain of gems, flowers and the like
> Continuously descend
> Upon all sublime jewels of dharma
> And upon stūpas and images.

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[14] Supriva, Prabha [rab dga']

[121] lung-dang-rtogs-pa'i-**dam**-pa'i-**chos dkon-mchog** yi-ge glegs-bam gyi rnam-pa dang-bcas-pa **thams-cad dang** / de-yang sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams kyis chos gsungs-pa'i tshe chos-snang-ba'i-cho-'phrul zhes me-tog-gi-char-dbab-par gsungs-pa bzhin-du lung-gi-chos 'chad-nyan-byed-pa'i dus thams-cad la dang / sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das mngon-par-rdzogs-par-byang-chub-pa'i dus-su gnas-gtsang-ma'i-lha dag gis me-tog-gi-char-dbab-par gsungs-pa ltar rtogs-pa'i-chos rgyud-la-skyes-ba'i dus thams-cad la dang /

[122] chos-sku'i-rten de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i-mdzad-pa-brgyad dang sgo-bstun-pa'i mchod-rten-cha-brgyad la-sogs-pa ste de-yang bdag-cag-gi-ston-pa sku-'khrungs-pa'i dus su padma-spung-pa'i-mchod-rten ser-skyar zas-gtsang gis bzhengs-pa / sangs-rgyas-pa'i-dus-su bdud-'dul-lam-byang-chub-mchod-rten gzugs-can-snying-po la-sogs-pas bzhengs-pa / chos-'khor bskor-ba'i tshe mchod-rten-bkra-shis-sgo-mang vā-rā-ṇa-sīr lnga-sdes bzhengs-pa / mu-stegs-ston-pa-sde-drug brtul-ba'i dus-su cho-'phrul-mchod-rten dze-ta'i-tshal du li-tsa-bis bzhengs-pa / sangs rgyas bcom-ldan-'das kyis lha-yul-sum-cu-rtsa-gsum du-ma la chos-bstan nas slar mi-yul gsal-ldan du bab tshe lha-bab-mchod-rten de-dag rnams kyis bzhengs-pa / dge-'dun dbyen-bsdum-pa'i dus-su dbyen-'dum-mchod-rten 'od-ma'i-tshal du ma-gha-dha-bas bzhengs-pa / sku-tshe'i-'du-byed-byin-gyis-rlabs-tshe rnam-rgyal-mchod-rten-myang-'das-mchod-rten rtsa-can du gyad kyis bzhengs-pa ste brgyad dang /

[123] mdo-sde-bskal-bzang las / de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i sku-gdung ni rgyas-par-'gyur ro zhes-gsungs-pa-ltar de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i tshems-mche-ba-bzhi-po las tshangs-pa dang / grong-khyer-sgra-sgrogs-kyi-'og-gi-klu dang / ka-ling-ka'i-rgyal-po dang / tshig-'dzin-yid-'ong-gi-grong-khyer gyi dri-za rnams kyis mchod-rten re-re bzhengs-pa dang / de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i-ring-bsrel yul-ma-gha-dha'i-bre-bo-che-brgyad dang ras-tshig-pa-dang-ma-tshig-pa rnams kyis mchod-rten-brgyad la-sogs-par bzhengs-pa dang / chos-rgyal-mya-ngan-med kyis gnod-sbyin-khol-po bsgrub nas 'dzam-gling-gi-sa-gnas bye-bar de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i-ring-bsrel-gyi-snying-po-can-gyi-mchod-rten bye-ba bzhengs-pa dang /

[124] rgyal-po srong-btsan-sgam-pos dge-slong-a-kar-ma-ti-shi-la sprul nas rgya-gar-gyi-mchod-rten-padma-spungs-pa nas de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i-ring-bsrel spyan-drang-pa da-lta jo-bo-rang-byung-lnga-ldan gyi smin-mtshams su bzhugs-pa dang / mchod-rten de las o-rgyan-sangs-rgyas-gnyis-pas rdzu-'phrul gyis ring-bsrel bre-gang spyan-drangs te bsam-yas-mchod-rten-dkar-po na bzhugs-pa las 'phel-ba skal-ldan-gyi-gang-zag gis da-lta'ang rnyed-du-yod-pa la-sogs-pa'i **mchod-rten rnams dang** /

[121] (May a continuous rain of gems, flowers and the like descend upon) **all** the **sublime jewels of** (both) the **dharma** of statements and of realization, including any type of dharma books. Further, it is said that when the Buddha and the bodhisattvas taught the dharma, a rain of flowers descended, called the 'miracle of illuminating the dharma'. (This happened) in the same way every time the dharma of statements was either taught or studied. It is also said that when the Buddha, the Bhagavān, attained completely manifest enlightenment, the gods of the pure realms let a rain of flowers descend. (This happened) in the same way every time the dharma of realization was born in the minds (of the Buddha's disciples).

[122] And (may a continuous rain of gems, flowers and the like descend upon) the eight types of stūpas and so forth, (the Buddha's) dharmakāya representations, which correspond to the eight deeds of the Tathāgata. These are: (1) When our teacher was born, (his father) Śuddhodana built in Kapila the 'Stūpa of Heaped Lotuses'; (2) When he attained buddhahood, (King) Bimbisāra and others built (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of Taming the Māras', also called 'Stūpa of Enlightenment'; (3) When (the Buddha) set the wheel of dharma in motion, the band of five built in Vārāṇasī (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of Multiple Doors of Auspiciousness'; (4) When he tamed the six tīrtika teachers, the Licchavis erected in Jetavana (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of the Miracles'; (5) When the Buddha, the Bhagavān, taught his mother in the god realm of the thirty-three [skr. trayastriṃśa] and descended again to the human realm in Kāśi [gsal ldan], (the people of Kāśi) built (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of Descending from the Gods'; (6) When the schism in the saṃgha was reconciled, the people from Maghadha erected in Veṇuvana (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of Reconciliation'; (7) When (the Buddha) extended his lifespan, the Mallas in Vaiśālī built (the stūpa called) 'Stūpa of Complete Victory'; (8) And (the Mallas also) built in Kuśinagara (the stūpa called) 'Parinirvāṇa Stūpa'.

[123] In the *Bhadra-kalpika-sūtra* it is said: "The relics of the Tathāgata are multiplying." With (each of) the four incisor teeth of the Tathāgata, (1) Brahmā, (2) the nāgas below the city of Ruroka (Rāvaṇa), (3) the king of Kalingka, and (4) the gandharvas of the delightful city of Gāndhāra erected one stūpa each. (Using) eight great Maghadha measures [bre bo che] of the relics of the Tathāgata plus his burned and unburned clothes, they built the 'eight stūpas' and others. The Dharma King Aśoka, employing yakṣas as his servants, erected at one billion places in Jambudvīpa one billion stūpas containing the relic essence of the Tathāgata.[15]

[124] King Songtsen Gampo emanated as the fully ordained monk named Akarmatiśi and brought relics of the Tathāgata (taken) from the Indian Stūpa of Heaped Lotuses. These (relics) are presently located in the space between the eyebrows of 'Jowo Rangjung Ngaden'. From the same stūpa, Urgyen (Padmasambhava), the second buddha, brought with his magical powers one full measure of relics and placed them in the white stūpa in Samye, from which (relics continue) to multiply. Fortunate people still obtain them nowadays and erect **stūpas**.

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[15] *Heaven Tree*, pages 335-337; *mdzangs blun*, pages 252-255; *Crystal Mirror Vol. 12*, pages12-14.

[125] ris-su-bris-pa blugs-su-blugs-pa 'bur-du-dod-pa'i **sku-gzugs la** ste / seng-ga-la'i-gling-gi-bu-mo mu-tig-'khri-shing bden-pa-la-'god-par-mdzad-pa'i ras-bris-kyi-thog-ma de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i bka'-yi-gnang-ba'i thang-sku-'od-zer-ma dang / bzo-rgyal-karma-bi-shvas rin-po-che sna-tshogs las de-bzhin--pa'i dgung-lo-nyer-lnga-ba'i-tshad dga'-ldan-lha'i-yul na bzhugs-pa dang bcu--pa'i-tshad jo-bo-rin-po-che shākya-mu-ni dang / brgyad-pa'i-tshad ra-mo-che-mi-bskyod-rdo-rje gnyis da-lta lha-sa na bzhugs-pa dang / tsan-dan-las-byas-pa'i jo-bo rgya-nag na bzhugs-pa la-sogs-pa dang /

[126] gsang-sngags-rdo-rje'i-theg-pa nas / bstan-pa'i-btsas-gsum zhes sku-rten-du rin-po-che brgya-rtsa-gcig las rang-byon-pa'i-sangs-rgyas-rdo-rje-'chang-gi-sku dang / gsung-rten-du bstan-pa-bu-gcig-gi-rgyud dang / thugs-rten-du rin-po-che brgya-rtsa-gcig gam gser-gyi-rje-rtse-lnga-pa khru-gang-ba gnas-bcu-gnyis la-sogs-pa gang-na rdzogs-pa-chen-po'i-chos dar-ba'i nam-mkha'i-gnas su 'byon-par-'gyur-ba la-sogs-pa ji-snyed-pa thams-cad la **rin-chen** sna-tshogs dang **me-tog** dang dri-bzang dang gos rgyan 'bru sman sna-tshogs-pa **la-sogs**-pa'i **char-**pa dus-rtag-tu **rgyun-mi-'chad-par 'bab-par-shog**-cig ces smon-pa ste / tshul-khrims-rnam-par-dag na smon-lam-ji-btab dngos-su-'grub-pa dang / de-ltar min-na'ang phan-yon-gyi-khyad-par ni 'thob-par-'gyur ro //

[127] bzhi-pa bla-na-med-pa'i-mchod-pa ni / byang-chub-sems-dpa' kun-tu-bzang-pos rang gi thugs-ka nas 'od-zer kha-dog mi-'dra-ba bye-ba-brgya-stong sangs-rgyas-kyi-zhing grangs-med-pa'i-rdul-mnyam-par spros 'od-zer de re-re'i rtse la yang byang-chub-sems-dpa' kun-tu-bzang-po rang-'dra-ba re-re sprul / de re-re'i thugs-ka nas sngar-dang-'dra-ba'i 'od-zer-spro zhing / de'i rtser kun-tu-bzang-po sprul-pa sogs grangs-med bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-pa'i bar-du spros te / de-dag re-res kyang mchod-rdzas-kyi-rnam-grangs bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-pas phyogs-bcu'i-rgyal-ba sras-bcas mchod-pa kun-tu-bzang-po'i-mchod-pa'i-sprin lta-bu /

[125] (And upon) **images**, drawn, cast or done in relief: The first canvas painting was called the 'Painting Taken From The Rays' and was made on the Tathāgata's instruction when he established the Singalese maiden Muktālatā[16] in the truth. The king of artists, Viśvakarma, made, among others, from various jewels, a statue of the Tathāgata (depicting the Buddha) at the age of twenty-five, which (now) remains in the Tuṣita god realm. The Jowo Rinpoche Śākyamuni, (depicting the Buddha) at the age of twelve, and the Ramoche Akṣobhya, (depicting the Buddha) at the age of eight, both now remaining in Lhasa. The Jowo, which (Viśvakarma) made out of sandalwood, (currently) remains in China.

[126] According to the Secret Mantra Vajrayāna there are the 'three objects of the doctrine'. The representation of body is a self-arisen statue of Buddha Vajradhara, made out of one hundred and one jewels. The representation of speech is the 'Single Son of the Teaching Tantra'. The representation of mind is a five-pronged vajra, one cubit tall, made out of one hundred and one jewels or out of gold. These (three objects) travel through the sky, spreading the teachings of the Great Perfection at the twelve places (of the twelve Dzogchen teachers) and others. **Upon** all these and other (sacred objects), as many as exist, **may a rain of** various **gems**, **flowers**, noble scents, varieties of clothes, ornaments, grains, medicines **and the like continuously descend**. Thus pray. When your discipline is utterly pure, whatever prayer you make will truly be fulfilled. Even if that is not the case, you will (at least) achieve a special benefit.

Unexcelled offerings

[127] Fourth, unexcelled offerings: The Bodhisattva Samantabhadra radiated from his heart center hundreds of thousands, (even) billions of multi-colored light rays, as many as the atoms in the countless buddha fields. On the tip of each light ray he emanated a Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, each identical with himself. From the heart centers of each of these he radiated rays of light as before. (Again,) on the tips of each of these, he emanated a Samantabhadra and so on, until he had radiated an incalculable and inconceivable (number). Each of these (Bodhisattva Samantabadhras) presented to the Victor and his sons an unimaginable amount of offering substances. These are the offering clouds of Samantabhadra.

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[16] Muktālatā, maiden [bu mo mu tig 'khri shing], see seventh story of Kalpalatā, page 452-454.

> inserted root text: stanza 22
>
> ji-ltar 'jam-dbyangs la-sogs-pas /
> rgyal-ba rnams la mchod mdzad-pa /
> de-bzhin bdag gis de-bzhin-gshegs /
> mgon-po sras dang-bcas rnams mchod /

[128] **ji-ltar 'jam**-pa'i-**dbyangs** dang kun-tu-bzang-po **la-sogs**-pa sa-bcu'i-byang-chub-sems-dpa' rnams kyis rnam-par-'phrul-pa'i-mchod-sprin mtha'-yas-**pas** phyogs-bcu'i **rgyal-ba** rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas **rnams la mchod**-pa-**mdzad-pa** yi tshul / dkon-mchog-ta-la las /

me-tog-phal-cher me-tog-bla-re dang //
me-tog-bkod-pa'i 'od-zer rab-bkye ste //
me-tog sna-tshogs kun-tu-bkram-byas nas //
bdag-nyid-chen-po de-dag rgyal-ba mchod //

[129] ces-pa la-sogs-pa gsungs-pa-ltar **de-bzhin**-du **bdag gis** kyang **de-bzhin-gshegs**-pa **mgon-po sras-dang-bcas**-pa **rnams** la **mchod**-pa dbul-bar-bgyi'o snyam-du-mos-par-bya'o // gzhan-yang byang-chub-tu-sems-bskeyd-pa / snying-rje-bsgom-pa / chos-kyi-tshig-don-'dzin-pa rnams kyang bla-na-med-pa'i-mchod-pa yin-pas de rnams kyang rang gis bya dgos so //

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> yon-tan rgya-mtsho rnams la bdag
> bstod-dbyangs yan-lag rgya-mtsho bstod /
> bstod-dbyangs snyan-sprin de-dag la /
> nges-par kun-tu 'byung-gyur-cig /

[130] lnga-pa bstod-pa-dbyangs-kyi-mchod-pa ni // sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das rnams sku mtshan-dpe / gsung tshangs-dbyangs / thugs rnam-mkhyen la-sogs-pa'i **yon-tan rgya-mtsho** lta-bu mnga'-ba sras byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs dang-bcas-pa **rnams la bdag** gis **bstod**-pa'i-**dbyangs** te skad-kyi-gdangs 'debs 'jog 'gyur khug phra sbom ste drug-ldan la-sogs-pa'i **yan-lag rgya-mtshos** te rgya-mtsho ltar mtha'-yas-pas **bstod**-par-bgyi zhing / **bstod**-pa'i-glu-**dbyangs** shin-tu-**snyan**-pa'i **sprin**-phung mtha'-yas-pa rnams rgyal-ba-sras-bcas **de-dag** rnams **la nges-par** te gdon-mi-za-bar dus-dang-rnam-pa-**kun-tu** khyab cing **'byung**-bar-**gyur-cig** ces smon-pa'o //

> inserted root text: 22
>
> In the same way as Mañjughoṣa and others
> Have made offerings to the victors,
> Similarly I present offerings to the tathāgatas,
> The protectors and their sons.

[128] **In the same way as Mañjughoṣa**, Samantabhadra **and others** of the tenth level bodhisattvas **have made offerings to the victors** of the ten directions, to the perfectly enlightened ones, with boundless emanated offering clouds, (I also offer). In the *Ratnolka-sūtra* it is said:

> Emanating light rays of multitudes of flowers,
> Canopies of flowers and flower arrangements,
> And by displaying a variety of flowers everywhere,
> I offer all these to the great being, the Victor.

[129] **Similarly** to what has been said (in this quote) and in other (texts), imagine, "**I present offerings** of gifts **to the tathagathas**, **the protectors and their sons**." Furthermore, because developing bodhicitta, meditating on compassion, and retaining the words and meanings of the teachings are (in themselves) unexcelled offerings, you should practice these.

Offerings of melodious praise

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> I praise the oceans of qualities
> With an ocean of variations of melodious eulogies;
> May clouds of lovely melodies of praise
> Actually ascend to them at all times.

[130] Fifth, the offerings of melodious praise: **I praise** the Buddha, the Bhagavān, who is endowed with **oceans of qualities** such as the major marks and minor signs on his body, the (60 aspects of) melodious speech, the omniscience of his mind and others, together with the host of his sons, the bodhisattvas, **with an ocean**—a limitless ocean—**of variations of melodious eulogies** in the six modes of vocal tones, such as (1) rising ['degs], (2) pausing ['jog], (3) alternating ['gyur], (4) sliding [khug], (5) high [phra] and (6) low [sbom], and so forth. **May** boundless **cloud** banks **of** the most **lovely melodies of praise** sung, **actually** and without doubt, **ascend** and spread **to them**, the victors and their sons, **at all times** and in all circumstances. Thus pray.

> inserted root text: stanza 24
>
> dus-gsum-gshegs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas kun /
> chos dang tshogs-kyi-mchog bcas la /
> zhing-rdul kun gyi grangs-snyed kyi /
> lus-btud-pas ni bdag phyag-'tshal /

[131] gnyis-pa phyag-'tshal-ba'i-yan-lag ni / phyogs-bcu'i-zhing mtha'-yas-pa na 'das-pa dang ma-'ongs-pa dang da-lta ste **dus-gsum**-du-**gshegs**-shing-bzhugs-**pa'i-sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das **kun** dang lung-dang-rtogs-pa'i-dam-pa'i-**chos dang tshogs**-rnams-kyi-mchog 'dus nas 'bral-ba-med-pa dge-'dun dang-**bcas**-pa rnams **la** rang-gi-lus phyogs-bcu'i-**zhing**-gi-**rdul** phra-rab **kun-gyi-grangs**-ji-**snyed**-yod-pa de snyed-**kyi**-grangs dang-mnyam-par sprul nas lus-btud-cing-gus-pas thal-mo-gnas-gsum-du-gtugs te lus-thams-cad sa-la-phab-pa'am yan-lag-lnga sa-la-phab-pa dang / ngag gus-pas phyag-'tshal-gyi-tshig dang / yid gus-pas dkon-mchog-rin-po-che-gsum-gyi-che-ba'i yon-tan dran te gus shing dad-**pas ni bdag**-cag gis **phyag-'tshal**-ba dang /

> inserted root text: 25
>
> byang-chub-sems kyi gzhi rnams dang /
> mchod-rten rnams la bdag phyag-'tshal /
> mkhan-po de-bzhin slob-dpon dang /
> brtul-zhugs-mchog la phyag-'tshal-lo /

[132] de-bzhin-du gang **byang-chub-sems-kyi-gzhi** zhes sangs-rgyas-kyi-sku-gzugs dang / theg-chen-gyi-sde-snod dang ston-pa'i-sku-bltam-pa'i-gnas la-sogs dang / sems-bskyed-gling sogs chos'-chad-nyan-byed-pa'i-gnas gzhi **rnams dang** / sku-gsung-thugs-kyi-rten dang **mchod-rten** gang-ji-snyed-yod-pa rnams **la'ang bdag**-nyid **phyag-'tshal** zhing /

The section on paying respect

> inserted root text: 24
>
> To all buddhas who appear throughout the three times,
> To the dharma and the supreme among gatherings,
> Bowing down with bodies as numerous
> As all the atoms in the buddha fields, I pay respect.

[131] Second, the section on paying respect: To **all** the **buddhas**, the bhagavāns, **who appear** and dwell **throughout the three times**—in past, present and future—in the infinite buddha fields of the ten directions, and to the sublime **dharma** of statements and realization, and **to** the saṃgha, those who are inseparable from the gathering, (meaning) the **supreme among gatherings**, **to** these, by multiplying my body to be **as numerous as** the number of **all the** most subtle **atoms in the buddha fields** of the ten directions, with devotion and faith, **I pay respect**.[17] (I pay respect) by devotedly **bowing down with** my **bodies**, touching my (joined) palms in veneration to the three places (of forehead, throat and heart), throwing all my (multiplied) bodies to the ground (in full prostration), or by lowering my five limbs to the ground. With devotion in my voice, I (recite) the words of paying respect. With devotion in my mind, I recall the qualities of the three precious jewels.

> inserted root text: stanza 25
>
> To the basis of bodhicitta
> And to (all) stūpas I pay respect.
> Likewise, to the preceptors and to the teachers
> As well as to those of supreme discipline, I pay respect.

[132] Likewise, **to** what is called **the basis of bodhicitta**: images of the Buddha; collections of Mahāyāna scriptures; (holy) places such as the birthplace of the teacher and others; places where the dharma is taught and studied, such as places where bodhicitta is developed; (places where there are) representations of body, speech and mind; **and to** (all) **stūpas**, as many as there are, **I pay respect**.

[17] In the Tibetan commentarial text, Khenpo Kunpal writes 'we' [bdag cag].

[133] so-thar-gyi-**mkhan-po** dang de lung-non-pa la’ang gsungs / **de-bzhin**-du dge-tshul-slong-gi-las-slob dang klog-slob-pa-po la-sogs-pa’i **slob-dpon rnams dang** / brtul-zhugs zhes-bya-ba snga-ma brtul te rjes-ma la zhugs-pas brtul-zhugs te ston-pa’i-rjes-’jug rtags-tsam-’dzin-pa yan-chad **brtul-zhugs-mchog** ste gos-dkar-lcang-lo’i-sde dang rab-byung-ngur-smrig-gi-sde rnams **la** mi-phyed-dad-pas kun-nas-bslangs te sgo-gsum gus-pas **phyag-’tshal-lo** zhes lus-ngag-yid-gsum-kyi-phyag gi nang-nas yid gtso-bas kha-yengs-mig-yengs kyi ngang-nas phyag mang-po ’tshal-ba bas sems-thog-nas phyag-gcig-tsam ’tshal-ba chod-che zhing phan-yon-che’o //

[134] de-yang lus-drang-por-bsrangs-bas rtsa-rlung-sems rnams drangs-bar-’gyur-bas drang-po-bzhi-ldan gyi sgo-nas rang-gi-g.yas-su pha g.yon-du ma mdun-du dgra-bgegs dang mtha’-skor-du sems-can thams-cad sa-gzhi’i-ngos la rdul-’khrigs-pa bzhin-du yod-par bsam ste thams-cad kyis lus gus-pas lag gnyis kyi thal-mo’i bar-du nor-bu bzung-bar bsams te / thar-mdo las /

> padma-kha-’bus-phyes’ dra-ba’i //
> lag-gnyis-spyi-bor-thal-sbyar te /

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[135] legs-par-sbyar-ba spyi-mgrin-snying-ka-gsum du rim-par gtugs-pa na de-bzhin-gshegs-pa rnams kyi sku-gsung-thugs-kyi-yon-tan dran zhing de dang der phyag-’tshal-bas rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi lus-ngag-yid-gsum gyi sgrib-pa thams-cad dang-bral nas dbu gtsug-tor-bltar-mi-mngon-pa dang / gsung chos-kyi-dung dang / thugs dpal-gyi-be’u’am sku-gsung-thugs-mi-zad-pa-rgyan-gyi-’khor-lo’i-yon-tan thams-cad thob-par-shog-cig ces bsam nas

[136] lus-thams-cad kyis sa-la-phab-pa’am yan-lag-lnga sa-la-phab-pa na bsam-par-bya-ba mdo las gsungs-pa ’di-ltar pus-mo-g.yas-pa’i-lha-nga sa-la-’dzugs-pa na sems-can thams-cad g.yas-phyogs drang-ba’i-lam la gnas-par-shog-cig ces brjod cing bsam-par-bya’o // pus-mo-g.yon-lha-nga sa-la-’dzugs-pa na sems-can gang-su-dag g.yon-phyogs ’khyogs-po’i-lam la gnas-pa thams-cad ’phags-pa’i-lam yang-dag-pa la gnas-par-gyur-cig ces brjod cing bsam mo //

[133] To **the preceptors** of prātimokṣa and to those who give reading transmissions, **likewise** to **the teachers** such as instructors for monks and fully ordained monks, the teachers for reading and so forth, **as well as** from those who only uphold the mere symbol of being a follower of the teaching up to **those of supreme discipline**, such as the (tantric) assembly with white clothes and long hair, and the ordained assembly with saffron (robes)—(note) 'discipline' means 'someone who has given up and entered' since (a practitioner) has given up his previous (conduct) and entered (into a new conduct)—**to** (all) these, motivated by indivisible faith, **I pay respect** with devotion through the three doors.[18] Because mind is the most important (factor) when paying respect with body, speech and mind, it is more important and of greater benefit to merely do a single prostration with (an undistracted) mind than to offer many prostrations in a state of distraction and nervousness.

[134] If one's body is positioned straight, then nāḍī, prana and mind are straight. Therefore, endowed with the four-fold straightness, imagine your father to your right, your mother to your left, and your enemies and obstructors in front of you. Surrounding you are all sentient beings arranged like dust on the surface of the earth. Imagine that all (these beings), in a devoted body (posture), hold a jewel between the palms of both hands. As it is said in the *Ghanajā-sūtra*:

> The palms joined above your head,
> Both hands (cupped) like an opening lotus bud.

[135] Thus, join (your palms) properly, touch them successively to the top of your head, to your throat center and to your heart center, and remember the qualities of body, speech and mind of the tathāgatas. While you pay respect to them in this way, think and say, "May all sentient beings, myself and others, be free from the obscurations of body, speech and mind. May we achieve upon our head the invisible uṣṇīṣa, in our throat center the dharma conch, and in our heart center the infinite knot." Or (think), "May we achieve all qualities of the unceasing ornamental wheel of body, speech and mind."

[136] Whether you throw your entire body to the ground or touch your five limbs to the ground, you may imagine what is stated in the sūtras: When putting the kneecap of your right knee on the ground, think and say, "May all sentient beings to my right side dwell on the straight path." When putting the kneecap of your left knee on the ground, think, "May all sentient beings to my left side, those dwelling on a crooked path, remain on the perfect path of noble beings."

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[18] The three doors of body, speech and mind.

[137] lag-pa-g.yas-pa sa-la-'dzugs-pa na ji-ltar de-bzhin-gshegs-pa byang-chub-kyi-snying-po-shing drung-du bzhugs te bsod-nams-brgya-las-grub-pa'i phyag-g.yas-sa-la-bsnun-nas bdud-sde dpung-dang-bcas-pa brtul te byang-chub-brnyes-pa de-bzhin-du sems-can thams-cad kyis kyang bdud dang phyir-brgol-ba thams-cad chom-par-gyur-cig / byang-chub-kyi-snying-po la 'dug cing lag-pas-sa-chen-po-la-bsnun nas sangs-rgyas-kyi-ye-shes thob-par-shog-cig brjod cing bsam mo //

[138] de'i lag-pa-g.yon-pa sa-la-'dzugs-pa na sems-can gang-su-dag byis-pa'i-chos la gnas te / g.yon-phyogs-su-'dzin-pa gdul-dka'-ba de-dag bsdu-ba'i-dngos-po-bzhis shin-tu-sdud-par-gyur-cig ces brjod cing bsam mo // de'i gdong dang dpral-ba sa-la-gtugs-pa na sems-cad thams-cad nga-rgyal-ma-mchis-pa 'dis bla-ma la rim-gro-bgyid-pa rnyed cing spyi-gtsug-bltar-mi-mngon-pa 'thob-pa dang / dge-ba'i-chos thams-cad 'phags-par-gyur-cig ces brjod cing bsam mo //

[139] de-ltar yan-lag-lngas-phyag-'tshal-ba'dis // sems-can thams-cad kyi sgrib-pa-lnga sel-bar-gyur-cig // dbang-po-lnga yongs-su-rdzogs-par-gyur-cig // 'dod-pa'i-yon-tan-lnga yongs-su-shes-par-gyur-cig / mngon-par-shes-pa-nyams-pa-med-pa-lnga thob-par-gyur-cig // mig-lnga yongs-su-dag-par-gyur-cig // 'gro-ba rgyud-lngar-skyes-pa-rnams 'gro-ba-lnga las khyad-par-du-'phags-par-gyur-cig // tshul-khrims khyad-par-du-'phags-pa-dang / ting-nge-'dzin khyad-par-du-'phags-pa dang / shes-rab khyad-par-du-'phags-pa dang / rnam-par-grol-ba kyhad-par-'phags-pa dang / rnam-par-grol-ba'i-ye-shes-mthong-ba khyad-par-du-'phags-par-gyur-cig ces brjod cing bsam-par-bya'o zhes gsungs so //

[140] de'i phan-yon yang ji-skad-du /

> lus-btud dbang-chen-bar-gyi-rdul-dag dang //
> mnyam-pa'i 'khor-los-bsgyur-rgyal grangs thob zhing //
> mthar-thug zhi-ba mchog-gi-go-'phang 'thob //

ces so //

[141] gsum-pa skyabs-su-'gro-ba'i-yan-lag ni / de la chos thams-cad kyi sgo-dbye sdom-pa thams-cad kyi gzhi-rten / yon-tan thams-cad kyi 'byung-gnas / phyi-nang-gi-khyad-par-'byed-pa dang / nang-pa'i-gral du tshud-byed skyabs-'gro 'di-nyid yin-pas shin-tu don-che-ba ste

[142] de-yang chos thams-cad kyi sgo-dbye yin te / nang-pa'i-chos-sgo gang la zhugs kyang dang-po skyabs-'gro nas 'jug dgos-pa'i phyir dang /

[143] sdom-pa thams-cad kyi gzhi-rten yang yin te / skyabs-'gro-bdun-bcu-pa las //

> sdom-pa kun la yod-mod-kyang //
> skyabs su ma song-ba la med //

ces ma-gi bsnyen-gnas-yan-lag-brgyad-pa nas ya-gi gsang-sngags-kyi-sdom-pa'i bar thams-cad skyabs su ma song-ba'i gang-zag rnams la ston-pas ma gnang la / skyabs-'gro'i-sdom-pa dang ldan-pa la sdom-pa thams-cad gnang-ba'i phyir ro //

[137] When placing the right hand on the ground, think and say, "All the tathāgatas, who have sat in front of the Bodhi Tree, touched their right hands, composed of hundreds of merits, to the ground, defeated Māra and his armies and attained enlightenment. In the same way, may all sentient beings defeat all māras and opponents. May they sit in front of the Bodhi Tree, touch their (right) hands to the ground and attain the wisdom of the Buddha."

[138] When placing the left hand on the ground, think and say, "May I gather all beings who adhere to worldly dharma, who cling to the wrong direction, or who are difficult to tame, through the four means of attraction." When touching your head or forehead to the ground, think and say, "May all beings, without any arrogance, serve their teachers, achieve the invisible uṣṇīṣa, and become exalted in the virtuous dharma."

[139] When paying respect with the five limbs (touching the ground), say and think, "May the five obscurations of all beings be removed. May the five capacities be entirely perfected. May (all beings) completely understand (the nature of) the five sense pleasures. May they achieve, without any decrease, the five supernatural powers. May the five eyes be utterly pure. May they become especially exalted beings among those born in the five classes of beings. May they have an especially exalted discipline, an especially exalted samādhi, a special knowledge, a special liberation and a special insight into liberating wisdom."

[140] The benefits are as said:

> If you bow down your bodies, as many as there are atoms on the ground,
> You will become a world monarch many times over and
> Ultimately, you will attain the level of supreme peace.

The section on going for refuge

[141] Third, the section on going for refuge: As it is the doorway to all teachings, the basis of all precepts, the source of all qualities, as it marks the difference between Buddhists and non-Buddhists, and as it causes one to enter the ranks of the Buddhists, (going for refuge) has extremely great significance.

[142] Now, (going for refuge) is the doorway to all teachings, because no matter which door of the Buddhist teachings one enters through, you must enter (only) after you have first gone for refuge.

[143] (Going for refuge) is the basis for all precepts. As the *Triśaraṇa-saptati* states:

> You might possess all precepts,
> But if you have not gone for refuge, you have none.

A teacher will never give any precpet, from the eight precepts observed for one day up to the precepts of Secret Mantra, to people who have not gone for refuge, but he will give all precepts to one endowed with the precepts of going for refuge.

[144] yon-tan thams-cad kyi 'byung-gnas kyang yin te / skyabs-sdom med-pa'i gang-zag gis so-byang-sngags-gsum-gyi-lam gang nyams-su-blangs kyang phan-pa-med de / 'bri-gung-skyob-pa-rin-po-ches /

> skyabs-'gro'i chos-gzhug shor na phan-pa-med //

ces gsungs shing /

[145] dper-na rming-rdo med-pas gyang dang ri-mo med-pa bzhin no // skyabs-sdom dang ldan-pa'i gang-zag gis so-byang-sngags-gsum-gyi-lam gang nyams-su-blangs kyang de dang de'i lam dang 'bras-bu'i yon-tan rnams 'byung-ba'i phyir dper-na rming-rdo brtan-pa'i gyang dang ri-mo bzhin no //

[146] phyi-nang-gi-khyad-par-'byed-byed dang nang-pa-sangs-rgyas-pa'i-gral-du-tshud-byed yin te / phyi-nang-gi-khyad-par 'di la gang-zag-gi-bdag-'dod-pa dang mi 'dod-pas 'byed-pa yod kyang / de-ltar-na rang-sde-gnas-ma-bu-bas /

> khur-khyer-ba yi gang-zag yod //
> rtag gam mi-rtag mi brjod do //

zhes brjod-med-kyi-bdag-'dod-pas nang-pa ma yin-par-'gyur zhing /

[147] spyir mu-stegs-pa zhes-pa ci-yang-mi-shes-pa zhig min te / rgya-gar jo-bo'i slob-ma paṇḍi-ta-sa'i-snying-po zhes-pas phyi-nang-gi-grub-mtha' la lan-gsum-rer zhugs kyang phyi-nang-gi-khyad-dbye-ma-shes-pa'i tshul ltar gsungs / paṇḍi-ta-dpal-ldan-jo-bo-chen-pos kyang / 'phags-yul na mkhas-pa'i-sgo-drug la-sogs-pa bzhugs kyang / nga yi bla-ma shin-ta-ba ni gshegs / nga ni bod du 'ongs-bas rgya-gar na phyi-nang-gi-dbye-ba shes-pa med gsungs-pa dang / nyid kyis kyang stod-mnga'-ris-yul du / skyabs-'gro kho-na gsungs-pas / mtshan yang skyabs-'gro'i-paṇḍi-ta zhes btags-pa na bod-kyi-mkhas-pa rnams kyis khyed kyis chos gzhan-zhig gsungs dgos te / ma gsungs na khyed kyi mtshan la yang skyabs-'gro'i-paṇḍi-ta btags-par 'dug zhus-pa la jo-bo nyid thugs-dgyes te / bdag gi ming-tsam gyis kyang sangs-rgyas-kyi-bstan-pa la bya-ba-byed 'dug gsungs /

[148] 'bri-gung-skyob-pas kyang / mdor-na dam-pa'i-chos thams-cad skyabs-'gro nyag-gcig la 'dus la zab-gnad kyang yin gsungs /

[144] (Going for refuge) is the source of all qualities, because a person who lacks the refuge precepts, regardless of the path he has practiced—prātimokṣa, bodhicitta or mantra—will gain no benefits. As Drigung Kyobpa Rinpoche said:

> If you lack refuge, which is the root of the dharma, you will gain no benefits.

[145] For instance, without a foundation (a house) can have no mud walls and frescos. A person endowed with the refuge precepts, regardless of which path he practices—prātimokṣa, bodhisattva or mantra—will achieve all qualities of that path and its fruition. Therefore, (the practices of prātimokṣa, bodhisattva or mantra) are just like walls and frescos which are resting on a firm foundation.

[146] (Going for refuge) marks the difference between Buddhists and non-Buddhists and causes you to enter the ranks of the Buddhists. One might mark the difference between Buddhist and non-Buddhist by the belief or disbelief in a personal identity. However, within our own (Buddhist) schools,[19] the (śrāvaka sub-school called) Vātsīputrīyas[20] would be (considered) non-Buddhist, as (this school) believes in an inexpressible identity, stating:

> There is an identity that I carry like a load.
> I cannot say whether it is permanent or impermanent.

[147] Generally, what is called a tīrtika is not someone without knowledge, because it is said that Atiśa's Indian student called Paṇḍita Kṣitigarbha studied the Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophies three times each but could not detect the difference between Buddhism and non-Buddhism. The great lord, the glorious Paṇḍita (Atiśa) said, "Though in the land of noble ones (India) the 'six gatekeeper paṇḍitas' and others might be still alive, yet my guru, Śintava, has passed away. Since I have come to Tibet no one in India knows how to distinguish between Buddhist and non-Buddhist." Because (Atiśa) taught in the district of Upper Ngari only on going for refuge, (his students) gave him the name 'the paṇḍita of refuge'. The scholars of Tibet told him, "You should teach also another dharma, but as you refuse, your name should be refuge paṇḍita." Lord (Atiśa) was delighted about this and replied, "Merely through my name alone I work for the teaching of the Buddha."

[148] Drigung Kyobpa said, "In short, all sublime teachings can be condensed only into refuge." Thus, he made a profound point.

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[19] Our own school [rang sde] here means 'our own Buddhist school' [nang pa sangs rgyas pa'i sde tshan].

[20] Vātsīputrīyas, the follwers of Vātsīputra [gnas ma bu'i sde], is one of the eighteen śrāvaka sub-schools [nyan thos sde ba bco brgyad]. See *Map of the Profound*, pages 210-218.

[149] de-lta-bu'i skyabs-'gro de 'chad-par-byed-pa la spyi-don dang / gzhung-don gnyis las / dang-po la / rgyu / ngo bo / dbye ba / so-so'i-don-bshad-pa dang bzhi /

[150] dang-po rgyu ni / dang-'dod-yid-ches-phyir-mi-ldog-pa'i-dad la las phyi-ma'o //

[151] gnyis-pa ngo-bo ni 'jigs-pa las sgrol-ba'i don-du skyabs-su-'dzin-pa khas-len cing dam-bcas-pa'o / de-yang gsol-'debs dang ma-nor-ba-zhig dgos te / gsol-'debs ni rang la nyes-pa sogs gang-yang-rung-ba byung tshe yul de la dngos-po-zhus te de las bdag bsrung-bar-gsol-ba'am zhu-ba-phul-du-'ong-ba yin te / dper-na mi-nyes-can-zhig gis dpon la lkog-nor-phul nas bdag la nyes-chad mi 'byung-bar gsol-ba-'debs-pa lta-bu yin la /

[152] skyabs-'gro ni mdo-rgyan las / khas-len de-yang zhes-pa ltar rang gis dus-da-nas-bzung-ste skyid-sdug legs-nyes / mtho-dman ci-byung-yang khyed-las-re-ltos-gzhan-du-med snyam-pas dkon-mchog-gsum la skyabs-gnas su khas-len cing dam-bca'-ba yin la / mdor-na skyabs-'gro'i-ngo-bo khas-len dang dam-bca' yin-par shes-pa gal-che'o //

[153] gsum-pa dbye-ba ni / skyabs-yul gyi sgo-nas dbye-ba yod kyang 'dir gtso-bo kun-slong gis dbye-ba yin la / de-la-yang 'jig-rten-pa'i-skyabs-'gro dang / 'jig-rten-las-'das-pa'i-skyabs-'gro dang gnyis / 'das-pa la'ang theg-dman dang theg-chen-gyi-skyabs-'gro gnyis / theg-chen la-yang gnas-skabs-rgyu'i-skyabs-'gro / mthar-thug-'bras-bu'i-skyabs-'gro gnyis so //

The explanation of the general meaning

[149] When explaining going for refuge, there is (the explanation of) the general meaning and (the explanation of) the meaning of the text. Of these two, the first (the explanation of the general meaning) has four (points): (1) (the explanation of) the base (of going for refuge), (2) (the explanation of) the essence (of going for refuge), (3) (the explanation of) the distinctions (of going for refuge), and (4) (the explanation of) the individual meaning (of going for refuge).

The explanation of the base of going for refuge

[150] First, (the explanation of) the base: Among (the four types of faith)—faith of amazement, faith of inspiration, confident faith, and irreversible faith—the base of going for refuge is the latter, (irreversible faith).

The explanation of the essence of going for refuge

[151] Second, (the explanation of) the essence (of going for refuge): In order to be liberated from fear, one identifies a refuge, accepts it and commits to it. One should not confuse (refuge) with a supplication. At the time when something happens, for instance, if one has a problem, if one asks help[21] from a (worldly or transcendent) object (of refuge), making a special prayer or request (such as), "Please protect me from this (problem)," then this is a supplication. It is like an evildoer offering bribes to an official, begging him, "Please do not let me be punished!"

[152] Concerning going for refuge, the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*[22] states, "It is also acceptance." (Going for refuge) is thinking, "From now on, whether I am happy or sad, in good or bad (circumstances), whether I am in a high or low (position)—whatever happens—I put all my hope and trust in you and no one else." (In this way), one accepts and commits to the three jewels as one's place of refuge. In short, it is important to understand that the essence of going for refuge is acceptance and commitment.

The explanation of the distinctions of going for refuge

[153] Third, (the explanation of) the distinctions: Although one can make distinctions with regard to the objects of going for refuge, here the distinctions are made mainly in terms of one's motivation. There is worldly refuge and transcendent refuge. As far as the transcendent (refuge) is concerned, there is the Hinayāna refuge and the Mahāyāna refuge. Mahāyāna (refuge) again (can be distinguished between) temporary causal refuge and ultimate resultant refuge.

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[21] dngos po zhu connotes to ask for help [rogs pa zhu / skyabs 'jug zhu].

[22] See text section 151

[154] bzhi-pa so-so'i-don-bshad-pa la // mdo-rgyal-mtshan-dam-pa las /

> 'jigs-pas skrag-pa'i mi dag-gis //
> phal-cher ri dang nags-tshal dang //
> kun-dga'-ra-ba ljon-shing dang //
> mchod-rten rnams la skyabs-su-'gro //
> skyabs de gtso-bo ma yin te //
> skyabs de-dag la brten nas ni //
> sdug-bsngal che las thar-mi-'gyur //

ces-pa-ltar /

[155] gnas-skabs nad-gdon la-sogs-pa'i rkyen-phran-bu-tsam la skrag nas ri dang nags-tshal sogs kyi lha dang / dbang-phyug dang tshangs-pa khyab-'jug dang sde-brgyad la-sogs-pa la skyabs-su-'dzin-pa yin la / de-dag gis sdug-bsngal thams-cad las skyob-pa lta-ci ste gnas-skabs-kyi-'jigs-pa las skyabs-par yang ma-nges-pas gtso-bo'am mchog min la // de-la skyabs-yul / dkon-mchog-gsum yin kyang bsam-pa 'jig-rten-pa yin na 'jig-rten-pa'i-skyabs-'gro yin no //

[156] 'jig-rten-las-'das-pa'i-skyabs-'gro la'ang / theg-dman-gyi-skyabs-'gro ni rkang-gnyis-rnams-kyi-mchog sangs-rgyas zhes rkang-gnyis-mi-rnams-kyi-mchog rgyal-ba-thub-pa lta-bu mchog-gi-sprul-pa'i-sku ste // thugs chos-sku dang sku-lus gzugs-sku-gnyis sangs-rgyas dang / zhi-ba 'dod-chags-dang-bral-ba-rnams-kyi-mchog dam-pa'i-chos zhes / spang-bya nyon-mongs sa-bon dang-bcas-pa spangs-ba'i-spang-ba'ang myang-'das sam 'gog-pa chos dang / tshogs-rnams-kyi-mchog dge-'dun zhes gang-zag-gi-rgyud du sngar-med gsar-du-'dus-pa'i-rtogs-pa de 'gro-ba-lha-dang-bcas-pas lam-bden dang gang-zag gnyis so-sor-dbye-bar-mi-nus-pas 'dus-pa-rnams-kyi-mchog dge-'dun yin te / sang-ga 'dus-pa la'o ces so // 'dus-pa gzhan ni skyes-pa'i-tha-ma-'chi / 'dus-pa'i-tha-ma-'bral-bar-'gyur-ba la-sogs-pas mchog ma yin no // de'ang slob-pa-rgyun-zhugs-phyir-'ong-phyir-mi-'ong-gsum dang / mi-slob-pa-dgra-bcom-pa dang bzhi'o //

[157] de-lta-bu'i dkon-mchog-gsum la kun-slong rang-nyid srid-pa-'khor-ba'i-'jigs-pa la skrag-nas phung-po la gshed-ma ral-gri-thogs-pa lta-bu dang / khams la sbrul-gdug lta-bu sogs su bltas te / de las grol-bar-'dod-pa'i bsam-pas gnas-skabs dus ji-srid-'tsho-ba'i-bar dang mthar-thug rang lam-gyi-'bras-bu ma-thob-kyi-bar-du skyabs-su-'gro-ba yin no //

The explanation of the individual meaning of going for refuge

[154] Fourth, regarding the explanation of the individual meaning, the *Dvajāgra-sūtra* states:

> People frightened by fear
> Generally go for refuge
> To mountains, forests, groves,
> Trees and (non-Buddhist) stūpas,
> Although these are not the main refuge.
> By relying on these as a refuge,
> They will never be liberated from great suffering.

[155] Being temporarily frightened by minor circumstances such as diseases, demons and the like, (people) take as refuge gods such as mountains, forests and so forth, and (gods) such as Īśvara, Brahma, Viṣṇu and the eight classes of local deities. Needless to mention that they cannot protect one from all suffering; whether they can even protect one from temporary fear is uncertain. Therefore, they are not the main or supreme (refuge). But even if the objects of one's refuge are the three jewels, this becomes a worldly refuge if one's motivation is worldly.

[156] Regarding the transcendent refuge, the Hinayāna refuge, one says, "To the supreme among humans, to the Buddha." The supreme among humans are the nirmāṇakāyas such as the Victor, Śākyamuni. That is to say, 'Buddha' (signifies) that his mind is the dharmakāya and his body is the twofold rūpakāya. One says, "To the supreme and peaceful, free from all craving, to the sublime dharma." 'Dharma' (signifies) the overcoming of what should be overcome, that is, all afflictions together with their seeds. It is also nirvāṇa as well as cessation. One says, "To the supreme gathering, to the saṃgha." This refers to a realization that was previously absent in the mind of a person, but is now newly 'gathered'. Neither men nor gods can separate the (realization of the) truth of the path from the person (who has realized it). Therefore, it is called 'the supreme among gatherings, the saṃgha'. 'Saṃgha' connotates 'gathering'. Other gatherings are not supreme because, as it is said, "What is born ends in death. What is gathered ends in separation." (The saṃgha is comprised of) the stream-enterer, the once-returner and the non-returner (belonging to the path of) learning, and the arhats (belonging to the path of) no-more-learning.

[157] To these three jewels you go for refuge with the (following) motivation, (saying), "Frightened by the horrors of saṃsāric existence—perceiving my body as though an executioner had raised his sword over it and the elements as if they were poisonous snakes, and thus wishing to be liberated from them—I go for refuge until the end of my life, as the limited time-span, and until I have reached the fruition of my path, as the ultimate time-span."

[158] theg-chen-gyi-skyabs-'gro ni / ma-nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-sems-can rnams la snying-rje drag-po shas-mi-bzod-pa bskyed nas snying-rje-sar-mi-bzhag-par de-dag sdug-bsngal de las sgrol-bar-bya dgos la de-yang rang-nyid ma grol-bar gzhan-sgrol-mi-nus-pas / rang-gzhan-thams-cad srid-zhi'i-'jigs-pa las sgrol phyir theg-chen-gyi-dkon-mchog-gsum la byang-chub-snying-po-ma-thob-bar-du skyabs-su'gro-ba yin la /

[159] de-la'ang gnas-skabs-rgyus-skyabs-'gro dang / mthar-thug-'bras-bu'i-skyabs-'gro gnyis las /

[160] dang-po ni / rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad srid-zhi'i-'jigs-pa las sgrol-ba'i phyir du gzhan-rgyud-la-byon-zin-gyi-dkon-mchog-gsum la skyabs-su-'gro-ba yin la / de ji-ltar zhe-na / thun-mong-ltar-bshad-na bdag-cag-gi-ston-pas sngon dang-po thugs-bskyed de bskal-pa-grangs-med-gsum du tshogs-bsags nas / mthar rgyal-po-zas-gtsang gi sras-su-'khrugs-nas byang-chub-shing drung-du mngon-par-byang-chub-pa rgyal-ba-shākya-thub-pa lta-bu rang-rgyud-las-tha-dad-pa'i sangs-rgyas sku-bzhi'am sku-gsum gyi bdag nyid sangs-rgyas-dkon-mchog dang / sangs-rgyas dang byang-sems kyi thugs-rgyud na bzhugs-pa'i lung-dang-rtogs-pa'i-chos dam-chos-dkon-mchog dang / byang-chub-sems-dpa' phyir-mi-ldog-pa rje-btsun-'jam-pa'i-dbyangs dang / byams-pa la-sogs-pa rang-las-tha-dad-pa'i dge-'dun te dge-'dun-dkon-mchog dang gsum la skyabs-su-'gro-ba'o //

[161] gnyis-pa 'bras-skyabs ni / mgon-pa-byams-pas / 'di ni de dngos 'dod-pas khas-len de yang snying-brtse las rig-bya // zhes-pa-ltar / rang-gzhan gyi srid-zhi'i-rgud-pa sel phyir mthar-thug-gi-dkon-mchog-gsum rang-rgyud la sgrub-par dam-bca'-ba yin la / mthar rang-rgyud la mchog-gsum de grub-pa na srid-zhi'i-'jigs-pa las grol-ba yin-pas skyabs-gnas-mthar-thug kyang de yin te /

[162] theg-pa-chen-po-rgyud-bla-ma las /

> dam-pa'i-don du 'gro-ba yi //
> skyabs ni sangs-rgyas-nyag-gcig ste //
> thub-pa chos-kyi-sku-can phyir //
> tshogs kyang de yi mthar-thug go //

ces gsungs-pa-ltar ro //

[158] (Regarding the transcendent) Mahāyāna refuge: One develops strong and unbearable [shas mi bzod pa] compassion for all mother-beings, infinite as the reaches of space. Not only must one not forsake them as objects for compassion, one must liberate them from suffering. But, as long as one is not liberated oneself, one cannot liberate others. Therefore, one says, "In order to liberate myself and all others from the fear of existence (saṃsāra) and peace (nirvāṇa), I go for refuge to the three jewels of Mahāyāna until the attainment of the essence of enlightenment."

[159] This (Mahāyāna refuge) also has two points: (1) (the explanation of) the temporary causal refuge and (2) (the explanation of) the ultimate resultant refuge. Of these two the first:

The explanation of the temporary causal refuge

[160] First, in order to liberate myself and all sentient beings from the fear of existence and peace, I go for refuge to the three jewels, which have manifested for the minds of others. Were one to ask what this means, it can be explained in a general way. In former times, when our teacher developed bodhicitta for the first time, he had gathered the accumulations for countless aeons. Eventually, he was born as the son of King Śuddhodana, attained complete enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree and became the Victor, Śākyamuni. In this way, one goes for refuge to the three (jewels): to the jewel of the Buddha, the embodiment of the four or three kāyas of the Buddha, different from my own mind; to the jewel of the sublime dharma, the dharma of statements and realization present in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas; and to the jewel of the saṃgha, the saṃgha as different from myself, the non-returners among the bodhisattvas such as the venerable Mañjuśri, Maitreya and others.

The explanation of the ultimate resultant refuge

[161] Second, the (ultimate) resultant refuge: As Lord Maitreya said (in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*): "Understand that because this (person) wishes (to obtain in himself) the real (three jewels), his very acceptance is (born) out of compassion and love." In order to remove all suffering of existence and peace for myself and others, I commit to accomplish in my own mind the three jewels. Eventually, when I have accomplished the three supreme ones in my mind, I will be freed from the fear of existence and peace and will become myself the ultimate refuge object.

[162] From the *Uttara-tantra*:

> Understand that the ultimate refuge
> Is only the Buddha.
> The Muni's (mind) is the dharmakāya
> And is, therefore, also the ultimate gathering.

[163] spyir rgyud-bla-ma'i don yang skyabs-'gro las-gzhan-med-par shes-dgos shing / khams byang-chub yon-tan phrin-las bzhis 'bras-skyabs kyang bstan-par gsungs / des-na rgyu'i-skyabs-'gros srid-zhi'i-'jigs-pa thams-cad las sgrol mi nus-pas skyabs-mthar-thug-pa ma yin no //

[164] de-ltar-na 'bras-skyabs dang smon-sems gnyis gcig-tu-'gyur-bas khyad ci-yin zhe-na / slob-dpon-dbyig-gnyen la rang-las-lhag-pa'i bu bzhi yod-pa las / mngon-pa rang-las-mkhas-pa slob-dpon-blo-gros-brtan-pas mdo-rgyan-gyi-'grel-chen las / sems-bskyed ces-bya skyabs-'gro zhes kyang bya // zhes gcig-tu-bzhed / rgya-gar jo-bos dam-bca'-ba'i-lcags-kyu gnyis yod-med-du-bzhed /

[165] kun-mkhyen-klong-chen-pas / rang-don dang gzhan-don gyi khyad yin gsungs-pa 'di'i dgongs-pa-la-brtags-na ngo-bo-gcig-la-ldog-pa-tha-dad-du-bzhed-pa yin te sems-can thams-cad kyi don-du zhes-pa'i ldog-pa-nas sems-bskyed dang / bdag gi rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas zhes-pa'i ldog-pa-nas skyabs-'gro yin la / de-lta-bu'i khyad-par-du-byas-nas dbye-ba yin gsungs so //

[166] gnyis-pa gzhung-don la spyir theg-pa che-chung gi skyabs-'gro'i-'khyad-par mang-du-yod-kyang 'dir khyad-par gsum dang-ldan-pa'i sgo-nas 'chad-pa la / khyad-par so-sor-bshad-pa dang / thun-mong-du 'gro-tshul-bshad-pa gnyis las / dang po la gnyis las /

[167] dang-po theg-dman-gyi-skyabs-'gro-bshad-pa ni / bsam-pa rang-nyid srid-pa-'khor-ba'i-jigs-pa las grol te zhi-ba-myang-'das thob-pa'i ched-du dus ji-srid-'tsho-ba'i-bar-du zhes 'dul-ba'i-gzhung nas gsungs-pa ltar ro //

[163] In general, one should know that the meaning of the *Uttara-tantra* is nothing other than going for refuge. In the four (chapters of the *Uttara-tantra* which concern) the elements, enlightenment, qualities and activities, the resultant refuge is taught. Because one cannot liberate oneself from the fear of existence and peace through the causal refuge, it is not the ultimate refuge.

[164] Were one to ask, "Since in this way the resultant refuge and the bodhicitta of aspiration have become identical, what is then the difference (between the two)?" Ācārya Vasubandhu had four sons who were superior to himself. Of these the Acārya Sthiramati was more learned than he was in Abhidharma. (Sthiramati wrote) in his great commentary on the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*: "What is called generating bodhicitta is also called going for refuge." Thus he claimed they were the same. The Indian Lord (Atiśa) stated, "It depends whether there are two hooks of commitment or not."

[165] The Omniscient Longchenpa said, "The difference is between the benefit for oneself and the benefit for others." If one analyzes this interpretation, one can state that they are identical in essence but different in their aspects. The aspect that says, "For the sake of all sentient beings," is the development of bodhicitta; the aspect that says, "I will attain perfect enlightenment," is going for refuge. By differentiating in this way, one can make these distinctions (development of bodhicitta and going for refuge)."

The meaning of the text

[166] Second, regarding the meaning of the text (of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra): Although there are generally many distinctions between going for refuge in the Hinayāna and in the Mahāyāna, here I will explain (going for refuge) by means of three distinctions.[23] (This explanation has) two (parts): (1) explaining the individual distinctions, and (2) explaining the general way of how to go (for refuge). The first has two (parts, the explanation of the Hinayāna refuge, and the explanation of the Mahāyāna refuge).

The explanation of the Hinayāna refuge

[167] From these the first, the explanation of the Hinayāna refuge: The motivation is as stated in the vinaya texts, "In order to liberate myself from the fear of existence and to achieve peaceful nirvāṇa, (I go for refuge) for as long as I am alive."

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[23] Among the many distinctions that are made in regard to going for refuge, Khenpo Kunpal's explanation discusses the meaning of stanza 26 by means of only three distinctions: the explanation of the Hinayāna refuge, the explanation of the Mahāyāna refuge, and the explanation of the general way of how to go for refuge.

[168] skyabs-yul ni mdzod las /

> gang-zhig gsum la skyabs-'gro-ba //
> sangs-rgyas dge-'dun byed-pa'i chos //
> mi-slob-pa dang gnyis-ka dang //
> mya-ngan-'das la skyabs-su-'gro //

zhes-pa ltar

[169] sangs-rgyas-kyi-sku sdug-bsngal-bden-pa'i-lhag-ma ste / rgyal-po-zas-gtsang gi sras rgyal-bu-don-grub ces so-so'i-skye-bo zhig yin la / des lam-lnga stan-thog-gcig-tu bsgrod nas mngon-par-byang-chub-pa yin-pas sku-lus ni sngar rgyal-bu-don-grub las-dbang-gis-'phang-pa'i so-skyes kyi lus de yin-pas skyabs-yul ma-yin zhes bye-smras-'dod-pa yin la /

[170] skyabs-yul ni sangs-rgyas kyi thugs-rgyud kyi mi-slob-pa'i-lam-bden te rtogs-pa ni sangs-rgyas dang / dge-'dun gyi sku-lus ni sdug-bsngal-bden-pa'i-lhag-ma yin la slob-mi-slob-pa'i-rgyud-kyi-lam-bden te rtogs-pa ni dge-'dun yin la / sangs-rgyas dang dge-'dun gyi thugs-rgyud na sgrib-pa-spang-bas-spang-ba'am myang-'das sam / 'dod-chags-bral-ba 'gog-bden chos dang / de-lta-bu'i dkon-mchog-gsum theg-dman-gyi-skyabs-yul yin no //

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> byang-chub-snying-por mchis-kyi-bar /
> sangs-rgyas rnams la skyabs-su-mchi /
> chos dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' yi /
> tshogs la'ang de-bzhin skyabs-su-mchi /

[171] gnyis-pa theg-chen-gyi-skyabs-'gro ni / bsam-pa nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-sems-can thams-cad rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas-kyi-go-'phang thob-pa'i ched-du dus-'di-nas-bzung-ste **byang-chub-snying-por** te snying-po-la-**mchis-kyi-bar**-du **sangs-rgyas** sku-bzhi-ye-shes-lnga'i-bdag-nyid-can **rnams la skyabs-su-mchi'o** // lung-dang-rtogs-pa'i-bdag-nyid dam-pa'i-**chos** rnams **dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' yi** 'phags-pa'i-dge-'dun gyi **tshogs la'ang** snga-ma **de-bzhin**-du **skyabs-su-mchi** zhes-pa ste /

[168] The refuge object is described in the *Abhidharma-koṣa*:[24]

> Whoever goes for refuge to the three (jewels)
> Goes for refuge to the dharma of no-more-learning, which brings forth the Buddha, and
> To the dharma of both learning and (no-more-learning), which brings forth the saṃgha,
> And (thus) to nirvāṇa, (to the truth of cessation alone).

[169] Buddha's body is considered a residue of the truth of suffering. As the son of King Śuddhodana he was an ordinary person with the name Prince Siddhārtha. He traversed the five paths on one seat and attained complete enlightenment. Therefore, his body was the body of an ordinary human being, driven by the karmic force of the former Prince Siddhārtha. For that reason (his body) is not the object of refuge. Thus the Vaibāṣikas state.

[170] As far as the refuge object is concerned: The Buddha is the truth of the path of no-more-learning in the mind of the Buddha; that is to say, the realization (of the truth of the path). The saṃgha is the truth of the paths of learning and no-more-learning in the minds (of the saṃgha members); that is to say the realization (of the truth of the path), since the bodies of saṃgha (members) are the residue of the truth of suffering. The dharma is the 'overcoming', since all obscurations have been overcome; (it is) 'nirvāṇa'; and (it is) the 'truth of cessation', free from craving, (all) of which are in the minds of the Buddha and the saṃgha. Such three jewels are the refuge objects in the Hinayāna (tradition).

The explanation of the Mahāyāna refuge

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> I go for refuge to the buddhas
> Until I attain the essence of awakening.
> Likewise, I go for refuge to the dharma
> And to the gathering of bodhisattvas.

[171] Second, the Mahāyāna refuge: The motivation is, "In order to establish all beings, equal to the reaches of space, on the level of complete enlightenment, from now **until I attain the essence of awakening**, **I go for refuge to the buddhas**, the embodiment of the three or four kayas. **Likewise**, just as before, **I go for refuge** to the sublime d**harma**, the embodiment of the statements and realizations, **and to the gathering** of the noble saṃgha **of bodhisattvas**."

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[24] page 35 / commentary pages 327-328

[172] de-yang dus-kyi-khyad-par bzang-spyod las /

> byang-chub-shing-dbang drung-du de myur 'gro //
> song nas sems-can phan phyir der 'dug ste //
> byang-chub sangs-rgyas 'khor-lo-rab-tu-bskor //

ces-pa-ltar

[173] bskal-bzang-'di'i-sangs-rgyas yin na rgya-gar-rdo-rje'i gdan du byang-chub-kyi-shing drung dang / rgyal-ba-'od-dpag-med lta-bu byang-chub-kyi-shing rin-chen-padmo-rnam-par-snang-byed ces-pa la-sogs-pa mdor-na dus-gsum-gyi-rgyal-ba thams-cad gang-du byang-chub-kyi-shing drung-du sangs-rgyas-pa ltar sems-can gyi don-du phyi byang-chub-snying-po'i-shing drung-du mngon-par-rdzogs-pa-byang-ma-chub-kyi-bar-du dang / nang rig-pa bde-gshegs-snying-po'i-gnas-lugs ma-lus-pa mngon-du-ma-gyur-bar-du ste /

[174] bde-gshegs-snying-po'i-gnas-lugs ji-lta-ba-bzhin mngon-du-gyur-pa sangs-rgyas ma-gtogs gzhan 'phags-chen rnams kyis kyang sangs-rgyas kyis gzigs-pa ltar mi mthong ste / mgon-po-byams-pas /

> btsas-pa'i khyim-nas bu-chung gis //
> nyi-ma'i-gzugs bzhin 'phags-pas kyang //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar ro /

[175] yul-gyi-khyad-par theg-chen thun-mong-ma-yin-pa'i dkon-mchog-gsum ste / sangs-rgyas ni / de-nyid kyis /

> 'dus-ma-byas shing lhun-gyis-grub //
> gzhan-gyi-rkyen gyis rtogs min-pa //
> mkhyen dang brtse dang nus-par-ldan //
> don-gnyis-ldan-pas sangs-rgyas-nyid //

ces gsungs-pa ltar /

[176] rgyu-rkyen gyis 'dus-ma-byas-pa dang / yon-tan lhun-gyis-grub-pa dang / gzhan-gyi-rkyen gyis rtogs-pa min-par so-sor-rang-rig-pa'i-ye-shes kyis mngon-sum-du rtogs-pa gsum rang-don-phun-tshogs-kyi-yon-tan dang / ji-lta-ba dang ji-snyed-pa gzigs-pas shes-bya thams-cad mkhyen nas dmigs-pa-med-pa'i brtse-ba'i-snying-rje chen-pos lam-ston cing sdug-bsngal dang nyon-mongs thams-cad spong-bar nus-pa gsum gzhan-don-phun-tshogs-kyi-yon-tan te /

[172] The distinction concerning time is shown in the *Bhadra-caryā-praṇidhāna*:

> They will soon go before the Bodhi Tree
> And having gone there, they will sit there to benefit beings,
> Awaken into enlightenment, turn the wheel (of dharma),
> And subdue all māras and their hordes.

[173] Thus, just like the buddhas of this fortunate aeon, who attained enlightenment in front of the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgayā, or like the Victor Amitābha, who attained enlightenment in front of the Bodhi Tree called 'Illuminating Jewel Lotus'; in short, just like all the victors of the three times, who attained enlightenment in front of whichever bodhi tree for the sake of all sentient beings, externally (I go for refuge) until the attainment of perfect enlightenment in front of the 'Essence-of-Awakening Tree', and internally until the complete attainment of awareness, the natural state of the buddha nature.

[174] The realization of the natural state of the enlightened essence, as it actually is, is obvious only to the Buddha but not to the other great noble beings. They cannot see it as the Buddha does. As Maitreyanātha said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> Even the noble ones (cannot see the buddha nature),
> Just as an infant cannot look at the shape of the sun from the house where
> it has just been born.

[175] The distinction of the object concerns the extraordinary three jewels of Mahāyāna. In regard to the Buddha, (Maitreyanātha) said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> (1) Uncompounded, (2) spontaneously present,
> (3) Not realized through external conditions,
> Endowed with (4) knowledge, (5) love, and (6) power—
> Such is the Buddha, endowed with the hallmark of twofold benefit.

[176] (Buddha nature)[25] is (1) not compounded by causes and conditions; its qualities are (2) spontaneously present. It is (3) not realized through external conditions but is only realized in actuality through one's own individual awareness wisdom. These three are the perfect qualities for one's own benefit. As (Buddha) sees (the buddha nature) as it is, as well as all there is, he has (4) the knowledge of all that can be known. With great compassionate, (5) non-conceptual love, he shows the path; and he has (6) the power to overcome all suffering and afflictions. These (last) three are the perfect qualities for the benefit of others.

[25] Please note that in this context, 'Buddha' and 'buddha nature' are identical.

[177] de-lta-bu'i don-gnyis mthar-phyin-pa'i-yon-tan dbye-gzhi-dbye-ba'i-ya-gyal-du-byas-pas yon-tan-brgyad-ldan-gyi-sangs-rgyas sku-bzhi'am sku-gsum mo //

[178] chos ni / de-nyid kyis /

bsam-med gnyis-med rtog-med-pa //
dag gsal gnyen-po'i-phyogs nyid kyis //
gang-zhig gang-gis chags-bral-ba //
bden-gnyis mtshan-nyid-can de chos //

zhes-pas

[179] rnam-rtog gis bsam-gyis-mi-khyab cing las dang nyon-mongs-pa dang / rnam-par-rtog-pa zhi-ba mthar-thug-pa gsum gang-zhig 'dod-chags-dang-bral-ba 'gog-bden-gyi-yon-tan dang / dri-mas-dag cing ye-shes-kyi-snang-ba gsal-ba-can kun-nas-nyon-mongs-pa'i gnyen-por-gyur-pa mthar-thug-pa gsum gang-gis 'dod-chags-dang-bral-ba lam-bden-gyi-yon-tan te / de-lta-bu'i bden-pa-gnyis kyi mtshan-nyid-can yon-tan-brgyad-ldan-rtogs-pa'i-chos so //

[180] 'di la legs-par-brtags na 'gog-bden ni spang-ba'i-cha'am med-pa yin-pas na rtogs-pa ma yin-pas rtogs-pa'i-chos ji-ltar yin bsam na / lam-bden gyis bzhag-pa'am lam-bden rtogs-pa'i lag-rjes yin-pas sam lam-bden gyis chags-pa-dang-bral-ba'i dbyings gang-zhig ye-shes dang gnyis-su-med-pa'i stong-pa'am dbyings la 'gog-pa zhes btags-pa yin-pas rtogs-pa'i-chos su bsdu-ba yin la 'di ni gnad-don gal-che-ba yin no //

[181] de-ltar bden-pa gnyis kyi mtshan-nyid-can rtogs-pa'i-chos kyi rgyu-mthun-pa'i theg-pa-chen-po'i-sde-snod kyi chos lung dang /

[182] dge-'dun ni theg-chen 'phags-pa phyir-mi-ldog-pa ste / byams-pas /

ji-ltar ji-snyed nang gi ni //
ye-shes-gzigs-pa dag-pas na //
blo-ldan phyir mi-ldog-pa'i-tshogs //
bla-med-yon-tan dang ldan nyid //

ces-pas

[177] Thus, by subdividing (each of) the ultimate qualities of the two benefits, the basis for making these distinctions, (into three), one arrives at the four or three kāyas of the Buddha endowed with eight qualities.[26]

[178] In regard to the dharma, (Maitreyanātha) said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> (1) Inconceivable, (2) without two, (3) non-conceptual,
> (4) Pure, (5) luminous and (6) having remedial power—
> That which is and that which frees one from craving
> Is the dharma, endowed with the hallmark of the two truths.

[179] (The dharma) (1) cannot be conceived by thoughts; (2) it is without (the two), karma and afflictions; and (3) it pacifies concepts. These three ultimate points are the qualities of the truth of cessation, which is free from craving. (The dharma) is (4) pure without any stains; its wisdom perception is (5) luminous; and (6) it has the remedial power for all afflictions. These (latter) three ultimate points, which free one from craving, are the qualities of the truth of the path. Thus the dharma of realization is endowed with eight qualities and possesses the hallmark of the two truths.[27]

[180] If one analyzes this carefully, one might think that since the truth of cessation is either 'overcoming' or 'absence', it would not be realization. How then could it be (classified as) the dharma of realization? (Cessation) is the outcome of the truth of the path or is the result of having realizing the truth of the path. Therefore, through the truth of the path (one attains) the expanse free from craving. That expanse or emptiness, inseparable from wisdom, is called 'cessation'. For this reason, (cessation) is classified under the 'dharma of realization'. This is a very important point.

[181] The dharma of the statements of the (three) Mahāyāna baskets accord with the dharma of realization, possessing the hallmark of the two truths.

[182] In regard to the saṃgha dharma, the non-returners, the noble beings of Mahāyāna, (Maitreyanātha) said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> (1) As it is, (2) all there is, and (3) the inner—
> These are wisdom perceptions. When (obscurations) are purified (4,5,6),
> The wise belong to the gathering of non-returners
> And are thus endowed with unexcelled qualities.

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[26] The two major divisions of one's own benefit [rang don] and benefit of others [gzhan don] plus the three qualities of each of these two divisions, amounts to a total of eight qualities.

[27] The truth of cessation and the truth of the path.

[183] gnas-lugs bde-gshegs-snying-po mngon-sum-rtogs-pa ji-lta-mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes dang / des sems-can thams-cad la khyab-par gzigs-pa ji-snyed-mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes dang / gnyis-su-med-par nang so-so-rang-rig-pa'i-ye-shes gsum rig-pa'i-yon-tan dang /

[184] ye-shes de-nyid nyon-shes-snyoms-'jug-gi-sgrib-pa-gsum mam / nyon-mongs-pa las grol-ba chags-sgrib las grol-ba dang / shes-sgrib las grol-ba thogs-sgrib las grol-ba dang / rang-'dod-yid-byed-kyi-zhen-pa dang bral-ba dman-sgrib las grol-ba gsum ni grol-ba'i-yon-tan gsum dang drug gam dbye-gzhi-dbye-ba'i-ya-gyal-du-byas-pas brgyad do //

[185] gnyis-pa skyabs-su-'gro-tshul ni /

> ston-pa bla-med sangs-rgyas //
> skyobs-pa bla-med dam-chos //
> 'dren-pa bla-med dge-'dun

ces-pa ltar /

[186] las-dang-po-pa rnams kyi skyabs-dngos chos yin te /

> ngas ni khyod la thar-pa'i-thabs bstan-pas //
> thar-pa rang la rag-las brtson-par-gyis //

[187] zhes dang /

> thub rnams sdig-pa chu yis mi 'khrud la //
> 'gro-ba'i sdug-bsngal phyag gis mi sel zhing //
> nyid kyis rtogs-pa gzhan la spo min yang //
> chos-nyid zhi-ba bstan las grol-bar 'gyur //

ces gsungs-pas

[188] dam-pa'i-chos rang gis bsgrub na 'khor-ba dang ngan-song gi sdug-bsngal las rang-nyid skyobs-par-'gyur te tha-na nyin-zhag phrug-gcig la bsnyen-gnas-gyi-sdom-pa bsrung-ba'i gang-zag des nyin der rang-rgyud nyes-ltung las skyabs nas phyi-ma lha-yul du skye-bar-'gyur-ba dang / de-ltar-na las-dang-po-pa'i skyabs-dngos dam-pa'i-chos yin-pas de-ma-gtogs-par skyabs-gnas gzhan gnyis kyis kyang dngos-su skyobs-mi-nus-pas skyobs-pa-bla-med dam-pa'i-chos zhes gsungs-pas na /

[183] The direct realization of the natural state, the buddha nature, is the wisdom that knows (buddha nature) (1) as it is. The wisdom that knows (2) all there is perceives that all sentient beings are pervaded by this, (the buddha nature). And the non-duality (of both former wisdoms) is one's individual and distinct (3) inner awareness wisdom. These three kinds of wisdom are the qualities of knowledge.

[184] Such wisdom is liberated from the obscuration of afflictions, the obscuration of cognition and the obscuration of absorptions. To be liberated from afflictions means to be liberated from the obscuration of attachment. To be liberated from the obscuration of cognition means to be liberated from the obscuration of cognitive limits. To be liberated from conceptual, egoistic attachment means to be liberated from the obscuration of inferior motivation. These are the three qualities of liberation. Together (with the three qualities of knowledge) they are six. By subdividing the basis for making these distinctions, one arrives at eight.

Explaining the general way of going for refuge

[185] Second, the way of going for refuge: As it is said:

> The incomparable teacher, the Buddha,
> The incomparable protection, the dharma,
> The incomparable guide, the saṃgha.

[186] The dharma is the real refuge for beginners. As it is said:

> I have shown you the methods that lead to liberation.
> Be diligent as liberation depends upon yourself.

[187] And further:

> Even though I am the Muni, I can neither wash away negative deeds
> Nor wipe away the suffering of beings with my hand.
> Although I cannot transfer my realization to others,
> Through my teachings on the peace of the natural state I can lead them to liberation.

[188] Thus, if one practices the sublime dharma, one protects oneself from the suffering of saṃsāra and the lower realms. At the very least, a person who keeps the (eight) precepts observed for one day is protected for that day from mistakes in his mind and will later be reborn in the realm of the gods. Therefore, the sublime dharma is the real refuge for the beginner. Because (at this point) the other two refuge objects do not have the power to really protect him, (the scriptures, by way of description) say, "The unexcelled protection, the sublime dharma…"

[189] gsang-sngags-rnying-ma-bas / skyabs-yul du bde-gsal-mi-rtog-pa-gsum dang / rtsa-rlung-thig-le-gsum dang / ngo-bo-rang-bzhin-thugs-rje-gsum sogs gsungs-pa ni / rang-lus kyi rtsa-thig-rlung-gsum dag-par-byed bsam nas dam-bcas-pa / de-ltar sgrub-pas rtsa-dag-pa sprul-sku sogs rang-gzhung nas bshad-pa'i 'bras-bu-'grub-par-'gyur la /

[190] gzhan-du skyabs-'gro dang gsol-'debs kyi khyad ma shes-par rtsa-thig-rlung-gsum rang-lus na gnas-pas de la bdag sogs skyabs-par-mdzad-du-gsol zhes re-ba-bca'-sa-med-pas mdor-na gsol-'debs dang skyabs-'gro'i khyad-par las-dang-po-pa'i skyabs-gnas-dngos chos yin-pa dang / chos de-yang rang-rgyud du bsgrub-par-byed dgos-pa ni / gnad-dam-pa yin-pas shes-pa gal-che-ba yin no //

[191] de-ltar skyabs-'gro'i-ngo-bo rang-gi-sems la dam-bca'-ba dang mchog-gsum las dam-pa'i-chos las-dang-po-pa'i skyabs-dngos yin-pa dang / de'ang rang gis sgrub-par dam-bca'-ba'i gnad de ma-gtogs-par gsang-sngags-rnying-ma-pa'i skyabs-yul gong-du-bshad-pa de-dag la dgag-pa brjod-pa ni / rang-nyid kyis skyabs-'gro dang gsol-'debs kyi khyad-par ma-shes-par-zad-do //

[192] de-ltar brjod-pa na rnying-ma-pa kha-gcig 'gal-spang gi lan-kyang-brjod-mi-shes-par khong-khro-ba dang / rang-gi-chos la the-tshom-skyes nas spong-ba sogs yod-pa ni gong-du-bstan-pa'i gnad de ma-gtogs-pas lan-pa yin no //

[193] 'o-na chos skyabs-dngos yin na sangs-rgyas dang dge-'dun gnyis skyabs-su-brjod-pa ci-yin zhe-na / sangs-rgyas ma byon na rang-re rmongs-pas chos zhes-bya-ba mi shes-pas sangs-rgyas-nyid kyis rang gang las gshegs-pa'i lam de ma-nor-ba'gro-ba rnams la yang-dag-par bstan-pas sangs-rgyas kyang skyabs yin no // dge-'dun ni rang-re snyigs-ma'i-sems-can ston-pa'i zhal-ras mjal-ba'i skal-ba-med-pa rnams yang-dag-pas thar-pa'i-lam-du-'dren-par-byed-pas na skyabs yin no //

[194] de-lta-bu'i dkon-mchog-gsum la ston-pa lam-grogs-kyi-tshul du skyabs-su-'gro dgos te / ji-ltar na / bdag-gi-ston-pa sangs-rgyas yin-pas des ji-skad gsungs-pa bzhin sgrub-pa ma-gtogs phyi-rol-mu-stegs-pa'i-ston-pa rnams dang / rang-re'i pha-ma nye-'brel la-sogs-pa'i chos-min-kyi-ngag la mi nyan bsam nas dam-bca'-ba dang / bdag-gi-lam chos yin-pas rgyal-ba'i-bka' bzhin-du dam-pa'i-chos sgrub-pa ma-gtogs / 'jig-rten-pa'i-bya-ba ngan-pa tshong dang so-nams dgra-'dul gnyen-skyongs la-sogs-pa mi byed bsam-pas dam-bca'-ba dang /

[189] In the Secret Mantra (teachings) of the Old School, bliss, clarity and non-thought; nadis, prana and bindus; essence, nature and responsiveness and the like are taught as the refuge objects. One is committed (to practice) with the determination to purify the nadis, prana and bindus of one's own body. If one practices in this way, one will accomplish results, as explained in the texts of our school, such as the nirmāṇakāya as the purified (aspect of the) nadis.

[190] Furthermore, being ignorant about the difference between refuge and supplication, one could pray, "I request you to protect me," thus putting one's expectation in the wrong place, since the nadis, prana and bindus are in one's own body. In short, in order to distinguish supplication from refuge, the object of refuge for the beginner is really the dharma. But the dharma must be practiced in one's mind. Because this is a sublime point, it is of great importance to understand it.

[191] Thus, the essence of refuge is to commit in one's own mind. For the beginner the sublime dharma is the real refuge among the three supreme (objects). One is committed to practice by oneself. Besides these points, there are those who voice their criticisms about the above-explained refuge objects of the Old School of Secret Mantra because they do not know the difference between refuge and supplication.

[192] When such (criticism) is expressed, some (practitioners) of the Old School, not knowing how to refute these accusations, become angry, develop doubts about their own practice, or even give up their practice and so forth. They are foolish because they have not realized the point just explained above.

[193] Now, if the dharma is the real refuge, why are the Buddha and the saṃgha also taught as places of refuge? Had the Buddha not appeared, due to our own ignorance we would never have known what is called 'the dharma'. The Buddha perfectly taught to sentient beings the unfailing path that he himself had traversed. Therefore, the Buddha is also a refuge. The saṃgha are those who perfectly guide us, sentient beings (endowed with the five) degenerations—we who lacked the fortune to meet the teacher face to face—on the path of liberation. Therefore, they too are a refuge.

[194] How should one go for refuge to the three jewels as the teacher, the path and the guides? "As the Buddha is my teacher, I commit that I will practice only what he has taught and will no longer listen to non-dharma talks from tīrtika[28] teachers, from my own parents, friends or others." "As the dharma is my path, I commit that I will only practice the sublime dharma, according to the teachings of the victors, and will no longer engage in negative worldly activities such as business, farming, fighting enemies, maintaining friends and so forth."

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[28] The Sanskrit tīrtika is often translated as 'heretic', but tīrtika rather refers to someone who sets out on a path different from the Buddhist one.

[195] dge-'dun la grogs-kyi-tshul-du skyabs-su-'gro ste // bdag-gi-grogs ni 'phags-pa'i-dge-'dun yin te dper-na lha-sa lta-bur 'gro na sgar-dpon des ji-ltar byed-pa de-ltar byed de 'gro na grogs yin-gyi gzhan-du der mi 'gro-ba dang 'gro yang de-tsam mi 'gro-ba thams-cad grogs min-pa ltar / 'jig-rten-pa'i-bya-ba ngan-pa chos-brgyad la g.yeng-pas skya-ser su-yin-kyang de-dag dang kha-blo-spyod-gsum la-sogs-pa gcig-tu-mi-byed /

[196] der-ma-zad nyan-rang yang bdag gi grogs min la / bdag gis ni rgyas-sras-byang-sems 'phags-pa rnams kyi rnam-thar gyi rjes-su-ji-lta-ba-bzhin-du-bslab la / de-dag ni bdag gi grogs yin no // gzhan chos-lam las bdag bsgyur-'gro-ba thams-cad dang mi-'grogs so snyam nas dam-bca'-ba yin no // des-na ston-pa lam-grogs-kyi-tshul-du skyabs-su-'gro-ba ni gnad-dam-pa yin no //

[197] de-ltar skyabs-su-'gro shes-pa tsam-gyis mi 'ong-bar rang-nyid-kyis slob-dpon gyi mdun nas skyabs-'gro'i-sdom-pa yang-dag-par-blangs dgos / blangs nas kyang bslab-bya rnams bsrung dgos pas de la thun-min-gyi dang / thun-mong-gi-bslab-bya gnyis // dang-po la // dgag-pa'i-dang / bsgrub-pa'i-dang / cha-mthun-gyi-bslab-bya gsum las //

[198] dang-po ni / sangs-rgyas la skyabs-su-song-nas 'khor-bar-'khor-ba'i-lha la gtan-gyi-skyabs-su-bzungs nas phyag-mchod-mi-bya // chos la skyabs-su-song-nas sems-can la gnod-'tshe mtshan rmi-lam-du-yang-mi-bya-bar ci-nus-su 'bad-pas bsrung / dge-'dun la skyabs-su-song-nas mu-stegs-can-dngos dang rang-gi-bla-ma dang chos la mi dad cing skur-pa-'debs-pa dang mi 'grogs /

[199] gnyis-pa ni / pad-dkar las /

> sku-gzugs rnam-pa mang-por de sprul nas //
> 'gro-ba dge-la-sbyor-ba'i don-mdzad do //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[200] sangs-rgyas-kyi-sku-rten dang / thugs-rten sā-tstsha'i-chags-dum-tsam la yang sangs-rgyas-dkon-mchog gi 'du-shes-bzhag ste ma-gus-pa-spangs / gus-pas-mchod / spyi-bos-bteg / gtsang-sar-'jog /

[201] chos la skyabs-su-song-nas chos-yi-ge 'bru-gcig yan-chad-la chos-dkon-mchog gi 'du-shes-bzhag ste ma-gus-pa-spang zhing gsung-rab-yi-ge sa-rjen-du-'jog-pa dang / 'gom-yug dang / gzhan yang yig-sdeb bsgyur-ba'i tshe mdzub-mo-mchil-mas-bsgos-pa dang / so-dreg sogs kyis mi-gtsang-ba-spang-nas gus-par-byed dgos te /

[195] Going for refuge in the manner of taking the saṃgha as the guide means that one's friends are the noble saṃgha. For instance, if one travels to Lhasa, one follows exactly what the tour leader [sgar dpon] does, because he is one's guide [grogs]. All others who do not go there (to Lhasa) or only go part of the way, are not one's guides. Likewise, in conversation, thinking and behavior, do not imitate [gcig tu mi byed] anyone, ordained or lay, who distracts you into negative worldly actions of the eight worldly concerns.

[196] Even the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are not one's (ultimate) guides. Commit yourself by thinking, "I will follow exactly the life (style) of the sons of the Victor, the bodhisattvas. They are my (ultimate) guides. I will not associate myself with people who lead me away from the path of the dharma." In this way one goes for refuge (to the three jewels) as the teacher, the path and the guide. This is a very sublime point.

[197] It is not enough to just know how to go for refuge. One needs to receive the refuge precepts from a master in the right way. Having received them, one must observe the precepts, which are twofold: the special [thun min] and the general [thun mong] precepts. The first has three: precepts concerning prohibitions, precepts concerning obligations, and supplementary precepts.

[198] First, (the three precepts concerning prohibitions): (1) "Having gone for refuge to the Buddha, I will not consider saṃsāric deities as my permanent refuge and will not present prostrations or offerings to them. (2) Having gone for refuge to the dharma, I will refrain from harming and injuring beings, not even in dreams. I will strive to protect them as much as I can. (3) Having gone for refuge to the saṃgha, I will not associate myself with real tīrtikas or those who have no faith in my teacher or the dharma and who slander them."

[199] Second, (the three precepts concerning obligations): As it is said in the *Puṇḍarīka-sūtra*:

> Emanating a multitude of various forms,
> They benefit beings by inspiring them to virtue.

[200] (1) "(Having gone for refuge to the Buddha), I will consider the representations of Buddha's body (such as statues) as well as the representations of his mind (such as stūpas), even a mere fragment of a terracotta image, as if it were the jewel of the Buddha. I will refrain from being disrespectful, I will respectfully present offerings (to them), place them on my head and leave them in a clean place. "

[201] (2) "Having gone for refuge to the dharma I will consider even a single letter of the teachings as if it were the jewel of the dharma and refrain from being disrespectful. I will treat them with respect, refraining from placing the scriptures on the bare floor and from stepping over them ['gom yug]. Furthermore, (I will refrain from) wetting my fingers with saliva when turning the pages of a book and staining them with teeth plaque [so dreg] and the like."

[202] snyan-gyi-gong-rgyan du //

lnga-brgya-tha-mar-gyur-pa-na //
nga-nyid yi-ge'i-gzugs-su-gnas //
nga yin snyam du yid-byos la //
de-tshe de la gus-par-gyis //

zhes dang / gaṇḍi'i-mdo las /

yum-chen-mo ni gaṇḍi'i-gzugs kyis bzhugs so //

zhes gsungs so //

[203] dge'-dun la yang rab-byung-gi-rtags ska-rags-ser-po-bcing-ba yan-chad dang / tha-na lhan-pa-dmar-ser tsam la yang dge-'dun-dkon-mchog gi 'du-shes-bzhag ste gus-par-byed dgos so // de-skad-du /

ma-'ongs thub-pa'i-bstan-pa nub-pa'i tshe //
dmar dang ser-po'i gos-kyi-ras-ma kun //
lha rnams kyis bsdus dad-pa'i-rten du khyer //
ri-rab rtse ru mchod-rten-byed-par gsungs //

zhes gsungs-pas so //

[204] gsum-pa ni / rang la blang-dor-gyi-gnas ston-pa'i bla-ma dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen la sangs-rgyas-dkon-mchog dngos kyi 'du-shes-bzhag ste / zhabs-tog bsnyen-bkur la 'bad / de'i bka'-stsal-ba'i gsung rnams la chos-dkon-mchog gi 'du-shes-bzhag ste / ci gsung dang-du-len zhing gsung gi zur-tsam-yang mi bcag / bla-ma'i-'khor grva-slob rnams la dge-'dun-dngos kyi 'du-shes-bzhag ste sgo-gsum gus-pas bsten mi-mnyes-pa skad-cig-tsam-yang mi bya ste /

[205] rnga-bo-che'i-mdor /

mya-ngan-ma-byed kun-dga-' bo //
smre-sngags-ma-'don kun-dga-' bo //
nga-nyid phyi-ma'i-dus kyi tshe //
dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen nyid sprul nas //
khyed la-sogs-pa'i don-byed-'gyur //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar ro //

[202] As it is said in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*:[29]

> In the last five-hundred-year cycle
> I will be present in the form of scriptures.
> Consider them as identical to me
> And show them due respect.

In the *Gaṇḍī-sūtra* is said:

> The Great Mother is present in the form of the gaṇḍī.

[203] (3) "(Having gone for refuge) to the saṃgha, I will respect any symbol of the ordained—be it only a yellow belt or no more than a patch of red or yellow (monk's robes)—as if it were the jewel of the saṃgha." As it is said:

> In the future, when the teaching of the Buddha will decline,
> All small pieces of red or yellow cloth
> Will be collected by the gods and taken away as objects of faith
> And will be placed in a stūpa on the peak of Mount Sumeru.

[204] Third, (the supplementary precepts): (1) "I will consider my guru and spiritual teacher, the one who teaches what to accept and what to reject, as the actual jewel of the Buddha. I will strive to serve him and honor him. (2) I will consider all he says as the jewel of the dharma, accept whatever he says, and will not disobey his word in the slightest. (3) I will consider the monks and students in the entourage of the guru as the actual saṃgha and will treat them with respect. I will not displease them even for one instant."

[205] As it is said in the *Mahā-bherī-sūtra*:

> Do not feel sad, Ānanda.
> Do not lament, Ānanda.
> In future times I will
> Incarnate as spiritual guides
> To help you and others.

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29 snyan gyi gong rgyan another name for the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* [phal po che].

[206] gnyis-pa thun-mong ni / mnga'-ris-paṇ-chen gyis /

> srog dang bya-dkar dkon-mchog-gsum mi spang /
> dgos-gal che yang thabs gzhan mi 'tshol zhing //
> dus-mchod-mi-bcag rang-gzhan skyabs-'gror-'god //
> gar-'gro'i-phyogs-kyi-sangs-rgyas la phyag-'tshal //
> lnga rnams thun-mong-bslab-byar jo-bo bzhed //

ces gsungs-pa ltar // blang-dor tshul-bzhin-du bya-ba rnams so //

[207] de-ltar skabs-su song-ba'i phan-yon ni / thar-pa'i-sa-bon-theb-pa dang / nang-pa'i gral-du-tshud-pa dang / 'jigs-pa las skyob cing byang-chub thob-par-'gyur-ba la-sogs-pa ste /

[208] nyi-ma'i-snying-po'i-mdo las /

> sangs-rgyas skyabs-su sems-can su 'gro-ba //
> bdud rnams bye-bas bsad-par mi nus te //
> tshul-khrims nyams shing blo ni 'khrugs-gyur kyang //
> de ni nges-par skye-ba'i pha-rol 'gro //

zhes dang /

[209] dri-ma-med-pa'i-mdo las /

> skyabs-su-song-ba'i bsod-nams gang //
> gal-te de la gzugs mchis na //
> nam-mkha'i-khams ni kun bkang nas //
> de ni de-bas lhag-par-'gyur //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar mtha-' yas so /

[210] bzhi-pa sdig-pa-bshags-pa'i-yan-lag la / bshags-yul mngon-du-bya-ba dang / bshags-pa-dngos gnyis las /

[206] Second, regarding the general precepts, Ngari Panchen said:

> (1) Never forsake the three jewels, not for gifts and not at the cost of your life.
> (2) However pressing the need, I will not seek any other means.
> (3) I will not fail to make offerings at the correct times and (4) (I will) establish myself and others in refuge.
> (5) Wherever I go, I will prostrate to the Buddha of that direction.
> Lord (Atiśa) thus stated these five to be the special precepts.

These are the activities that accord with what should be accepted and rejected.

[207] The benefit of having gone for refuge in this way: The seed of liberation is planted; one enters the ranks of the Buddhists; one will be protected from fear; (one) will (eventually) reach enlightenment; and so on.

[208] From the *Sūrya-garbha-sūtra*:

> If someone goes for refuge to the Buddha,
> He cannot be killed by billions of māras.
> Even if his discipline has deteriorated and his mind is upset,
> He will certainly have a transcendental rebirth.

[209] From the *Vimaladatta-paripṛcchā-sūtra*:

> If all the merit of taking refuge
> Had a physical form,
> The whole of space
> Would not be large enough to contain it.

There are infinte quotes like this.

The Section on Confessing Negative Deeds

[210] Fourth, the section on confessing negative deeds has two parts: the visualization of the objects for confession and the actual confession.

> inserted roo text: stanza 27
>
> phyogs rnams kun na bzhugs-pa yi /
> rdzogs-sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems /
> thugs-rje-chen-po-mnga'-rnams la /
> thal-mo-sbyar-te gsol-ba ni /

[211] dang-po ni / bshags-yul **phyogs**-bcu'i-jig rten **rnams** te mtha'-yas-pa **kun-na-bzhugs-pa yi** yang-dang-par-**rdzogs**-pa'i-**sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das rnams **dang byang-chub-sems**-dpa'-chen-po thugs **snying-rje-chen-po mnga'**-ba **rnams** mdun-gyi-nam-mkhar dmigs **la** lus kyis **thal-mo-sbyar-te** ngag gis **gsol-ba** ste zhu-ba-'bul-ba **ni** 'di-ltar zhes so //

[212] gnyis-pa bshags-pa-dngos la / sun-'byin-pa'i-stobs / rten-gyi-stobs / gnyen-po-kun-tu-spyod-pa'i-stobs / sor-chud-pa'i-stobs dang bzhi las /

> inserted root text: stanza 28
>
> thog ma med ldan 'khor ba nas /
> tshe rabs 'di'am gzhan dag tu /
> bdag gis ma 'tshal sdig bgyis pa'am /
> bgyid du stsal ba nyid dang ni /

[213] dang-po ni / ci zhu na dus **thog-ma-med**-pa dang **ldan**-pa'i **'khor-ba nas** bzung ste da-lta'i **tshe-rabs 'di'am** tshe-rabs snga-ma **gzhan-dag tu bdag gis** blang-dor-gyi-gnas **ma 'tshal** zhes ma-rig-pa nyon-mongs-pa'i dbang gis **sdig-pa** mi-dge-ba rang-bzhin-dang-bcas-pa'i-kha-na-ma-tho-ba sbyor-ba rang gis dngos-su-**bgyis-pa'am** gzhan-dag la **bgyid-du-stsal-ba nyid dang ni** /

The visualization of the objects for confession

> inserted root text : stanza 27
>
> Perfect buddhas and bodhisattvas,
> Endowed with great compassion,
> Residing in all directions,
> Joining my palms, I beseech you thus:

[211] First, I visualize in the sky before me the objects for confession, the utterly **perfect buddhas**, the bhagavāns, **and** the great **bodhisattvas**, who are **endowed with great compassion** and are **residing in all** infinite world systems of the ten **directions**. Physically **joining my palms**, I **beseech** them with my voice, **thus** presenting my request and saying the following:

The actual confession

[212] Second, the actual confession has four parts: (1) the power of remorse, (2) the power of the support, (3) the power of the applied antidote, and (4) the power of resolve.

The power of remorse

> inserted root text: stanza 28
>
> Throughout beginningless saṃsāra
> In this lifetime and in others,
> Ignorantly I committed negative deeds,
> Incited (others) to commit them and,

[213] First: What should you request? "**Throughout beginningless saṃsāra**, **in this** present **lifetime and in** all **other** previous lifetimes, **I** have **ignorantly**, meaning through the power of the affliction of ignorance about the points of what to do and what to avoid, in (my) conduct[30] actually **committed** myself **negative deeds**, non-virtuous actions, and misdeeds of violating natural and established rules, **incited** others **to commit them and,** …

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[30] sbyor ba is usually translated as 'application', but in this context means 'conduct'.

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> gti-mug 'khrul-pas bdag non te /
> rjes-su-yi-rang gang bgyis-pa /
> nongs-pa de ni mthong-bgyis nas
> bsam-pa-thag-pas mgon la bshags /

[214] rgyu-'bras blang-dor la rmongs-pa'i **gti-mug** gis **'khrul**-par-gyur-**pas bdag** zil-gyis-**non te** / gzhan sdig-pa-byed-pa la **rjes-su-yi-rang**-ba ste dga'-ba **gang bgyis-pa'i** sdig-pa de gsum la che-chung-med-pas gang-dang-gang-byas-pa'i nyes-pa'am **nongs-pa de ni mthong** zhes nyes-pa la nyes-par-mthong-bar-**bgyis nas** kha-tsam-tshig-tsam-ma-yin-par **bsam-pa-thag-pas** te snying-thag-pa-nas **mgon-po** sangs-rgyas sras dang bcas-pa **la** mthol-zhing-**bshags** te slan-chad kyang sdom-par-bgyi'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> bdag gis dkon-mchog-gsum dang ni /
> pha-ma'am bla-ma gzhan-dag la /
> nyon-mongs sgo-nas lus ngag dang /
> yid kyis gnod-bgyis gang lags-pa /

[215] khyad-par nyes-pa che-shos yul yon-tan-kyi-zhing **bdag gis** sangs-rgyas chos dge-'dun te **dkon-mchog-gsum dang ni** phan-'dogs-pa'i-zhing **pha** dang **ma'am** yon-tan-gyi-khur-du-lci zhing bkur-bar-'os-pa'i-zhing mkhan-slob sogs **bla-ma gzhan-dag la** kun-slong chags-sdang-rmongs-gsum la-sogs-pa'i **nyon-mongs**-pa'i **sgo-nas** sbyor-ba **lus** kyis bcom-brlag brdung-brdeg sogs dang **ngag** gis skur-'debs ngan-smra sogs **dang yid kyis** log-lta ngan-sems sogs **gnod**-pa-**bgyis**-pa **gang lags-pa** dang /

[216] de-las-kyang dkon-mchog la gnod-pa'i-las dang dkor-'phrog-pa nyes-pa che ste sangs-rgyas dang chos dang chos-'chad-pa-po'i yo-byad thams-cad sangs-rgyas dang chos kyi dkor yin la de-dag rku-'phrog dang g.yo-sgyus ma-byin-par-blang-ba la-sogs-pa ni / ma-pham-pas /

> gang-zhig yid ni chos la sdang-ba de la thar-pa ga-la yod //

ces dang /

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> Overwhelmed by the delusion of ignorance,
> I rejoiced (in negativity). Whichever of these (deeds) I have done,
> Recognizing this as a fault,
> I confess to you, protectors, from the depth of my heart.

[214] **Overwhelmed by the delusion of ignorance**, ignorant about cause and effect, about what to do and what to avoid, **I rejoiced** and took delight in the negativity of others. **Whichever of these** three negative deeds **I have done**, there is no difference in their gravity. Therefore, **recognizing this**, whatever I may have done, **as a fault** or as a mistake, that is to say, seeing faults as faults, **from the depth of my heart** or from the bottom of my heart, not just with mere words or mere talk, I openly **confess to you**, **protectors**, to the buddhas and their sons, and promise (not to repeat these negative deeds) in the future."

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> Whatever harm I have done due to my afflictions,
> With body, speech and mind,
> To the three jewels,
> My father, mother, teachers and others;

[215] **Whatever harm I have done due to my afflictions** such as attachment, aversion and ignorance—this being my motivation; and killing, destroying, hitting and beating with my **body**, slandering and saying bad things with my **speech**, **and** maintaining wrong views and a negative attitude **with** my **mind** and so forth—this being my application; and in particular, the worst mistakes (possible, the harm I have inflicted) **to** the field of qualities, **the three jewels**: the Buddha, the dharma and the saṃgha; upon the field of benefits: **my father and mother**; upon the field heavily loaded with qualities and worthy of praise: the **teachers** such as my preceptors, masters and **others** …

[216] Among these, actions that harm the (three) jewels and the stealing of monastic property are grave mistakes. All things that belong to the Buddha, to the dharma, and to the expounders of the dharma are the property of the Buddha and the dharma. Stealing and robbing these or taking what is not given through deceit and so forth (have dire results). As Ajita (Maitreya) said (in the *Uttara-tantra*):

> How should someone who has in his mind aversion toward the dharma
> ever gain liberation?

[217] grub-thob-skyer-sgang-pa'i sku-lus aḥ dkar-pos lan-mang phugs nas na-tsha drag-po byung-ba brgyad-stong-pa'i tshab yon-bdag bdag gis drang-pa'i rnam-smin du gsungs-pa sogs dang /

[218] de la phyogs-bcu'i dge-'dun-gyi-dkor dang de-las-kyang zhal-du-'du-ba'i-sgo nyes-pa shin-tu che-bar gsungs te / mdor-na dge-'dun la dbang-ba'i yo-byad che-phra gang-dang-gang rku-'phrog dang tshong sogs g.yo-sgyus-blang na bshags-pa'i thabs-med-par dmyal-bar skye nges-par mdo las gsungs te /

> dge-'dun gyi ni rdo-rje dang 'dra'o //
> dge-'dun gyi ni dug dang 'dra'o //
> dug la ni gnyen-po yod kyi //
> dge-'dun gyi ni ma yin no //

[219] dge-'dun gyi phru-ba ste rdza-kho la longs-spyad-pas de-lta-bu'i dmyal-ba skyes-pa'i lo-rgyus sogs dang / gzhan-yang lha-khang steng mar 'bul rgyu 'og-ma dang / 'og-mar 'bul rgyu steng-ma dang / dge-'dun-pa'i-dbyar-rnyed dgun dang dgun-rnyed dbyar du 'jog-pa dang / de-ring 'bul rgyu sang-nang bar bzhag du mi-rung-bar thams-cad-mkhyen-pa sangs-rgyas kyis gsungs so //

[220] de'i-tshul cung-zad-cig sngon-gyi gtam-dang-sbyar na / 'dul-ba las / dge-'dun gyi 'du-khang rtsigs-pa dang ka-ba la mchil-ma dang snabs kyis ma-rung-ba-byas-pas rtsigs-pa dang ka-ba lta-bu'i dmyal-ba dang / gtun dang phyags-ma sogs rang-gis longs-spyad-pas gtun dang phyags-ma lta-bu'i dmyal-bar skye-ba dang / dge-'dun-pa'i dbyar-rnyed dgun-rnyed dang dgun-rnyed dbyar-rnyed du bsgyur nas ma bgos-pas sems-can sked-pa chad-pa chus-rgyus kyis sbrel-ba 'gro zhing shin-tu sdug-bsngal-bar gsungs-pa dang /

[221] mdzangs-blun las / shing-sdong chen-po khab-rtse tsam-yang ma khyab-pa med-par srin-bu sna-tshogs kyis khyab cing za-bar-gyur-bas shin-tu sdug-bsngal zhing 'o-dod-'bod-pa yang dge-'dun-gyi-las-byed-pa li-ta zhes-bas dge-'dun-gyi-dkor la rang-spyad cing bza-' btung gzhan khyim-pa'i-phyogs la byin-pa'i rnam-smin rang shing-sdong dang gzhan srin-bur gyur-ba dang de las 'phos te dmyal-bar skye-bar gsungs-pa dang /

[217] (For example), the body of the siddha Kyer-Gang-Pa was pierced many times by white A letters, and he thus suffered from a severe disease. He said, "This is the (karmic) ripening from keeping the money a sponsor gave me to (recite) the *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā*,[31] (without doing the recitation)."

[218] (Mishandling or stealing) the possessions of the saṃgha of the ten directions and, even more so, offerings made directly to the saṃgha [zhal du 'du ba'i sgo], is said to be an extremely great misdeed. In short, if one acquires with deceit, through stealing, robbing, doing business and so forth, things that belong to the saṃgha, whatever they may be, big or small, one will certainly take rebirth in hell, as there is no method to confess (this misdeed). Thus, it is said in the sūtras:

> The (property of the) saṃgha is (indigestible) like a diamond (vajra).
> The (property of the) saṃgha is like poison.
> But while there are remedies for poison,
> There is none for (misusing the property of) the saṃgha.

[219] Among others, a story (is told) about someone who took rebirth in (a clay pot-like) hell, just because he used a cooking pot [phru ba], that is to say a clay pot [rdza khog], (belonging to) the saṃgha. Furthermore, the Omniscient Buddha said that it is improper to give what was meant for the upper temple to the lower; to hand out the summer earnings of the saṃgha in the winter or the winter earnings in the summer; or to hand out what was given for today on the next day.

[220] To illustrate this a little bit with (appropriate) stories from the past, the vinaya says: It is not appropriate to spit at or smear snot onto the walls or pillars of a temple hall of the saṃgha, because one will take rebirth in a wall or pillar-like hell realm. Even if one uses only a dustbin, a broom or the like (that belongs to the saṃgha), one will take rebirth in a dustbin or broom-like hell realm. If one does not hand out the summer earnings of the saṃgha but uses them for the winter earnings or the winter earnings for the summer earnings, one will take a rebirth as an insect with a waistline which is (almost) severed and joined only by a tiny thread and will have intense suffering.

[221] In the *Damamāko-sūtra*[32] it is said: A big tree was covered with various insects who ate it, just as if it were perforated by needles. Thus, suffering tremendously, it uttered lamentations. That (tree had been) a helper of the saṃgha called 'Lita' who used the property of the saṃgha for himself and also gave food and drinks to his relatives. As a karmic ripening he became a tree, and his relatives became insects. It was said that after he died, he took rebirth in the hell realms.

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[31] The Short-length Mother [yum bsdus pa] refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in eight thousand lines [brgyad stong pa], this being the short collection in one single volume.

[32] See *mdzangs blun*, the Sūtra of the Wise One and the Fool

[222] rgyal-po'i-khab kyi grong-khyer kyi mi-gtsang-ba'i ldeng-ka zhig gi nang na srin-bu sbrul 'dra-ba rkang-pa bzhi yod-pa lo mang-por sdug-bsngal tshad-med-pa myong-ba der ston-pa 'khor-bcas byon te 'khor rnams la de'i las bstan-pa /

[223] sngon sangs-rgyas rnam-gzigs kyi bstan-pa la / dge-slong stong-phrag-bcu-bzhi dgon-par-gnas-pa la tshong-pa lnga-brgyas rin-po-che bsod-nam-kyi-zong du phul-ba bzhes nas zhal-ta-ba'i dge-slong la gtad do // phyi bsod-snyoms kyis brel nas zhal-ta-ba la sngar-kyi rin-po-che btsong ngam zhes-pas de khros te khyed-cag skyag-pa-za'am / kho-bo gcig-pu la byin gyi khyed kun la ma byin no zer-bas / dge-'dun kyang so-sor-gyes so //

[224] rgyu des mtshams-med-pa'i-dmyal-ba-chen-por ltung / ngan-skyugs kyi nang-du bskal-pa dgu-bcu-rtsa-gcig gi bar-du 'gre-'gre'o // de las thar nas da-lta 'dir ngan-skyugs kyi khung-bur skyes nas lo mang-po lon yang ma thar te / 'di-lta-ste

[225] sngon 'das-pa'i-sangs-rgyas rin-chen-gtsug-tor-can dge-'dun 'khor-bcas 'dir gshegs nas nyer-gnas rnams la 'di'i las bstan to // de-nas sangs-rgyas thams-cad-skyob kyang de-bzhin-du bstan to // de-nas tshe-'phos te yang dmyal-bar skyes te lo khrag-khrig grangs-med-pa du-ma lon nas phyir yang khung-bu 'dir skyes so // de'i-'og-tu / 'khor-ba-'jig dang / gser-thub dang / 'od-srung gis kyang de-bzhin-du bstan to // de-bzhin sangs-rgyas-stong-po kun nyer-gnas dang bdas te 'dir gshegs nas srin-bu 'di'i sngon-las ston-par-'gyur ro zhes gsungs-pa dang / dge-slong rnams spu-langs te lus-ngag-yid-gsum shin-tu bsrung-ba la brtson-par-gyur to zhes mdzangs-blun las so //

[226] nā-len-tra'i byang-phyogs na / su-khyen-grong zhes-pa sa-phug dang bcas-pa gcig na / byis-pa mang-po rtse-ba'i dbus-su rlung-tshub-'khyil-ba me-'phro-ba gcig byung-ba la / byis-pa rnams kyis rdo-rub-byas-pas / byis-pa bros dus-su 'bog-pa gcig la btab nas rkang-pa phyin-ka log-tu-'gro zhing pags-pa'i-skyi shig-shig-byas te / kha-nas me-lce nyug cing / sam-skṛ-ta'i-skad-du thams-cad la 'bar ro //

[227] de'i nye-'khor na byams-pa sgom-pa'i rnal-'byor-pa gcig yod-pa des gsan nas / byis-pa 'di-'dras kyang saṃ-skṛ-ta'i-skad shes-pa ngo-mtshar-che'o snyam nas nyan-du phyin-pas de la me-'bar-ba 'dug nas rgyu-mtshan-dris-pas / 'di rnams sdang-sems kyis nyan-pas 'bar la khyod dad-sems kyis nyan-pas mi 'bar-ba yin zer /

[222] Again, in the city of Rājagṛha, in a sewage pond, there dwelled a snake-like insect with four legs, who experienced immeasurable suffering for many years. The teacher (Buddha Śākyamuni) went there together with his entourage and taught them, his entourage, about the karma of that being.

[223] In a former era, during the doctrine of Buddha Vipaśyin, forty thousand fully ordained monks, who were living at a monastery, received jewels from five hundred businessmen, who offered them as meritorious merchandise, entrusting them to the fully ordained monk (named) Vaiyāpṛta [zhal ta ba]. Later, when (the monks) were deprived of alms, they asked Vaiyāpṛta, "Did you sell the jewels from before?" He became angry and replied, "Eat shit, you! This was given only to me. It was not given to all of you." Because of this the saṃgha was dispersed.

[224] For this reason (Vaiyāpṛta) fell into the great hell without any intermediate state. For ninety-one aeons he rolled around in vomit. After being freed from this (state), he has now been born in this pit of vomit, (in the sewage pond), and he still will not be liberated from it for many years. This is how it is.

[225] Also, the Buddha of the past, Ratna Śikhin, came together with his entourage to that place and taught his disciples [nyer gnas] about the karma of this being. Buddha Viśvabhukra then taught about the same. After (the snake-like insect) died, it was again born in hell and stayed there for one hundred thousand incalculable years. Then, once again, it was born in this hole. Later, Buddha Krakucchanda, Buddha Kanakamuni, and Buddha Kāśyapa taught about the karma of this being. Likewise, all one thousand buddhas and their disciples will come here and teach about the previous karma of this insect. As (Buddha) had thus spoken, the monks' hair stood on end, and they endeavored to be very disciplined in body, speech and mind. So the *Damamāko-sūtra* (narrates).[33]

[226] To the north of Nālandā (University) was (a place) called the Village of Katvaṃ. In the ground was a cave around which many child (monks) played. (On one occasion a preta in the form of) a whirlwind of sparkling firelight arose among them. The children threw stones at it, and ran away. (While they were running), one (child) who had thrown (a stone) was possessed (by the preta). (Suddenly, his) feet pointed backwards, the surface of his skin [pags pa'i skyi] began to peel away [shig shig byas pa], a tongue of flame issued from his mouth, he began speaking in the Sanskrit language, and his entire (body) started to burn up.

[227] Nearby was a yogin who was meditating on loving-kindness. He heard (the child) and thought, "How amazing that even a child like this knows Sanskrit," and went there to listen. He asked (the preta who had taken possession of the child), "What is the reason that this (child) is burning?" (The preta) answered, "(This child) is burning because they welcomed me [nyan pas] with angry minds. Because you welcomed me with a devoted mind, you are not being burned."

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33 See *mdzangs blun* chapter 50, pages 466-469.

[228] 'o-na 'dir las gang-gis skyes dris-pas / btsun-pa 'di rnams thon-gcig dang / khyod byams-pa'i rnal-'byor bzang-po gcig 'dug-pas drang-por-bshad do zer te / bton-pas / nga nā-lendra'i mkhan-po rgyal-'byung yin te / nga-rang bdag-po yin snyams nas / dge-'dun gyi 'bras-snyigs bre-phyed thub-chod-du-spyad-pas / da-lta lto bsregs-pa'i yi-dvags su skyes nas rtag-tu nang-khrol thams-cad 'bar-ba'i mes-bsreg-pa'i me-lce kha sna nas nyug-pa yin /

[229] sde-snod bzhugs-pa'i gtsug-lhag-khang du mchil-lham ma phud-par phyin-pas rkang-pa phyin-log-tu 'chu-ba dang / nga ni 'du-khang gi thub-sku la sgron-me phul-bas sku-mnye-byas te skyin-pa 'tshab-pa ma grub-pas / pags-pa'i-skyi shig-pa'i sdug-bsngal rtag-tu yod-pas dkor 'di 'jigs / dkon-mchog-gsum las dge-'dun-gyi-dkor 'di kho-na lci-bar 'dug go zer /

[230] 'di las nam thar dris-pas / 'di las lo stong-phrag-bco-lnga na thar te / de-nas mnar-med du 'gro dgos-par 'dug zer / 'di la bshags-thabs med dam byas pas / las-'bras la khyad-gsod-byas-pas ye-med zer / dge-'dun-gyi-dkor la 'dzem na phan-yon che ste / nga'i nyer-gnas dpal-yon bya-bas dge-'dun la srog-pas gces shing yo-byad la dug bas 'jigs-pa gcig yod de kho 'chi-khar 'ja'-'od dang rol-mo dang bcas nas lha dang chos-skyong gis bsus nas song / kho da-tsam 'khor-ba las grol te mchi zer /

[231] 'o-na btsun-gzhon rnams gdon dgos-pa'i rgyu-mtshan dris-pas / de thams-cad nga'i mkhan-bu yin-pas thos na nga ngo-tsha khong rnams yi-mug nas 'gro zer / de-nas dar-tsam-gcig dran-med-du-song /

[232] yang lab-pa la da-ci-nas-gar-phyin dris-pas / phu-ya-gi-na rnal-'byor-pa gcig 'dug-pa'i dge-sbyor gyi bar-chad la phyin zer / khyed mkhan-po sde-snod-gsum shes-pa gcig de-'dra byed-pa zhan byas-pas / bden te nga'i shes-pa la rang-dbang-med zer yang song yang byis-pa de la btab nas lus thams-cad drod-du-byas te kha sna nas me-lce-nyug cing thams-cad la 'bar-ba la /

[233] sngar-gyi rnal-'byor de spyan-drangs te / khro-bo'i-dmigs-pa gcig byas-pas kho rgod cing gtum-po'i bskyed-rim la brtan-pa thob-pas / 'jig-rten gyi nus-mthu-can su la'ang mi-'jigs zer /

[228] (The yogin) asked, "What kind of karma caused you to be born here?" (The preta said), "Send the monks away, and I will tell (the story) truthfully, since you are a noble yogin of loving-kindness." When they had been sent away, (the preta) said, "I was a professor of Nālandā (monastery) who was called Gyal-Jung [rgyal 'byung]. Feeling like I was the owner of Nālandā, I ate illicitly [thub chod] half a measure of rice husk belonging to the saṃgha. Due to that, I have now taken birth as a preta with a burning belly. The fire that is constantly burning up my entire intestines issues as tongues of flames from my mouth."

[229] "Because I did not remove my shoes when I entered the temple hall containing the three baskets (of teachings), my feet point backwards. Since I anointed my body [sku mnye byas te] with the (butter for) the offering lamps offered to the Buddha statue in the temple hall and never paid back my debt, I (now) constantly suffer the peeling away of my skin. Monastic property is frightening. From among the three jewels, only the property of the saṃgha carries such weight."

[230] (The yogin asked), "When will you be released from this life?" "I will be released from this life after fifteen thousand years. Then I must go to the Avīci hell." (The yogin asked), "Is there no method to confess this?" (The preta replied), "(The consequences of) cause and effect should never be underestimated [khyad gsod byas pas]. If one is sensitive toward the property of the saṃgha, the benefit is great. My disciple [nye gnas] called Pal-Yön [dpal yon] was one who loved the saṃgha more than his own life and feared their property more than poison. When he was about to die, he passed away escorted by gods and dharmapalas, accompanied by rainbows, lights and music. Dying, he was instantaneously [da tsam] liberated from saṃsāra."

[231] (The yogin asked), "What is the reason for sending the young monks away?" (The preta said), "As they were all my students (before), if they heard (this story), I would be ashamed and they would be saddened." Then (the preta) briefly fell unconscious.

[232] When (the preta) could talk again, (the yogin) asked him, "Where did you go just now?" (The preta) replied, "I went to create obstacles to the virtuous practice of one yogin who lives in that upper part of the valley." (The yogin said), "You are a preceptor, who knows the three baskets (of teachings). Why do you behave so badly?" (The preta) replied, "That's true, but I cannot control my mind," and left, again possessing the child, so that its entire body became hot, with tongues of fire issuing from its mouth, burning it up entirely.

[233] Then the precious yogin (from the upper part of the valley) was called. When he performed a wrathful concentration, (the preta) said, "He has attained stability in wrathful, fiery visualizations, but I am not scared of anybody who has such worldly powers."

[234] 'o-na kho-can 'ong-ba'i rgyu-mtshan dris-pas / ngas zas-bag re rnyed kyang zos na lto'i me-la-shing-bsnan-pa bzhin 'gyur gyin 'dug nas sngar-'dris-kyi-bag-chags kyis kho ltog-pa la ster-du-'ong-ba yin te / kho'i las-ngan sad-rkyen-byed gyin 'dug-pa zer

[235] de-dag gi rgyu-mtshan dris-pas da mkhan-po-byed dus su / kho nā-lentra'i brda'-sprod slob-tu-'ong nas brtul-zhugs dang mi ldan-par dge-'dun-gyi-tshul dang chu shing la spyad-pa'i mthong-chos zer /

[236] des 'dzad dam dris-pas / myong mgo-btsugs kyis rnam-smin phyi-ma yi-dvags su 'gro zer / de la thabs yod dam byas-pas dge-'dun rang la bsnyen-bkur-byas te / spyan-sngar mthol-zhing-bshags na 'dag go zer /

[237] rnal-'byor-pas de la dmigs-pa'i byams-pa yud-tsam skyes-pas / thal-mo-sbyar te ma yang byon bdog gam zer nas mchi-ma-phral-byas te song-bas phyin-chad der ma 'khor ro / der de-bzhin tshogs su mthol te / glengs-pas der 'dus phal-cher khong gi mkhan-bu yin-par 'dug nas thams-cad cho-nges-song ngo // des-na bcom-ldan-'das kyis dge-'dun-gyi-rdzas la sha-bu'i 'du-shes-bzhag-par-bya'o zhes-pa'i don to //

[238] yang sngon skyes-bu lnga-brgyas khyim-bya'i-lha-khang gi dge'-dun kyi chu-rnyog-pas chu des 'bras-btsor ma btub-pas de'i nyin dge-'dun gyi chos-ston-chags-pas de'i rnam-smin gyis yi-dvags 'jigs-su-rung-ba lnga-brgyar skyes shing sdug-bsngal-ba'i-tshul mdo las gsungs-pa dang /

[239] yang jo-bo-rje nā-lentra na bzhugs dus-na / zhal-ta-ba chos-bzhin byed-pa gcig yod / des nyin-gcig dge-'dun la btung-ba-'dren-pa byung yang gcig byung-ba na de-ring skom-mang-po yod kyi sang ma byung na mi-nyan-pas nang-par drang snyam ste bzhag-pa dang mtshan-mo skom shin-tu ches-pas chu-zangs-chen-mo nas chu 'thung-bar phyin-pa dang chu-zangs su chu-skam nas chu-thig kyang mi 'dug /

[234] (The first yogin who was meditating on loving-kindness then) asked, "Why did you go to (that yogin)?" (The preta) replied, "When I eat, even if I only get a little barley as food, it is like adding wood to the fire in my belly. Due to my former habits, I came to him to satisfy my hunger. (My causing trouble for him) is a condition for clearing away his bad karma."

[235] (The first yogin) asked, "What is the reason for this?" (The preta) replied, "At the time when I was professor, he came to Nālandā to study grammar. Without keeping any discipline, he enjoyed the lifestyle of a saṃgha (member) as well as (monastic property such as) water and wood. Because of this, he is (experiencing the karma) of visible retribution in this life."[34]

[236] (The first yogin) asked, "Has (his bad karma) been exhausted through this?" (The preta) replied, "The experience (of his karmic ripening) has begun but its ripening will lead to (his birth) as a preta in his next life." (The first yogin) asked, "What can he do about this?" (The preta) replied, "He must pay homage directly to the saṃgha. When he openly confesses right in front of them, (his negative karma) can be purified."

[237] When the (first) yogin developed loving-kindness toward this (preta) for one brief moment, (the preta) joined his palms and said, "Will I never come back?" Shedding tears (the preta) left and never again returned. While (the preta) was openly recounting (his story) to the assembly, most of whom had been his students, they all began to cry [cho nges song ngo]. Therefore, (understand) the meaning of what the Bhagavān said, "Concerning the property of the saṃgha, keep (in mind) the metaphor of a flesh-eating insect [sha bu]."

[238] Futhermore, in former times five hundred people had polluted the water of a saṃgha's kitchen temple [khyim bya'i lha khang]. Since (the saṃgha) was thus unable to use it for cooking rice, the dharma teaching of the saṃgha for this day was interrupted. As the (karmic) ripening of this, (the five hundred people) were born as five hundred frightful pretas, and their manner of suffering is recounted in the sūtras.

[239] Once again, at the time when Lord (Atiśa) was residing at Nālandā, there was a servant [zhal ta ba] who practiced in accordance with the dharma. One day, he was the distributor of drinks and he thought, "If I make a (generous) distribution (of water now), there will be plenty of water for today. But if I cannot make (a distribution) tomorrow (because of being too generous today and not leaving enough water), then that would be incorrect [mi nyan pa]. Therefore, I would rather distribute (the water) tomorrow.[35]" (Thinking) thus, he left. Becoming very thirsty that night, he went to drink water from the big copper water tank, but the water in the copper tank had dried up and not even a drop of water remained.

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[34] karma experienced in this life [mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las]

[35] By not distributing all the water, he was actually withholding from the saṃgha something that was due them on that same day.

[240] da ci bkang na da med-pa mi-srid nga 'khrul 'dug brtag-par-bya snyam ste rdo gicg der bzhag / de-nas sgo na mtsho'u che-ba yod-pa la btung ngo snyam-pas song-ba na de-yang skam nas 'dug / 'di-'dra mi-srid nga 'khrul 'dug 'on-kyang brtag-par snyam ste / dkyil-du tho-chen-po-brtigs nas bzhag /

[241] yang gang-gā la btung ngo snyam-pas de-yang skam nas 'dug /'di-'dra mi-srid nga 'khrul 'dug 'on-kyang brtag snyam ste gang-gā'i-pha-rol-na shing-sdong zhig 'dug-pa la chos-gos dkris nas bzhag / skom-gyis-gdung bzhin nyal nang-bar bltas tshe chu-zangs chus bkang-ba'i nang-du rdo bcug 'dug / mtsho'u ye-thar-rgyu-med-pa de'i nang-du tho-chen-brtsigs 'dug / gang-gā'i-pha-rol gyi shing-sdong la chos-gos dkris pa mthong-ba bzhin gsungs / de-ma-thag-'bras-bu-smin-pa sgrib-pa chung-bas yin gsungs /

[242] de-nas bla-ma dang dgon-sde'i phyag-mdzod dang spyi-khag dkor-gnyer-ba sogs las-'dzin-pa che-chung rnams kyi gtsos bla-ma dang dge-'dun-pa la phan-tshun 'brel zhing 'dris-che-ba rnams la shin-tu 'byung nye-ba'i dkon-mchog gi dkor spyi dang khyad par dge-'dun-pa'i-dkor 'di la thugs-gzab bag-yod re ma mdzad na bskal-ba mang-po'i bar-du dmyal-bar btso-bsreg la-sogs-pa'i sdug-bsngal mi-bzad-pa myong nges-pa la bsams nas cung-zad re-e-phan snyam-pa'i sems kyis smras-pa 'di la gzigs shing bag-yod res bka'-drin yang zhu /

> inserted root text : stanza 31
>
> nyes-pa du-mas skyon-chags-pa'i /
> sdig-can bdag gis sdig-pa gang /
> shin-tu mi-bzad bgyis-pa de /
> thams-cad-'dren-pa rnams la bshags /

[243] de-ltar sgo-gsum **nyes-pa du-mas skyon** sems-rgyud la lcags la g.ya' ltar **chags** shing gnas-**pa'i sdig-can** nam sdig-rgan-po **bdag gis sdig-pa gang shin-tu** nyes-pa che zhing **mi-bzad**-pa dmyal-ba la-sogs-par skye-ba'i las-ngan **bgyis-pa de thams-cad 'dren-pa** sangs-rgyas sras dang bcas-pa **rnams la** so-sor-mthol-zhing-**bshags** so //

[240] He considered, "Since this was just full, it can't be empty now. I must be deluded. I'll look into this." He placed a stone in (the tank). Then he thought, "I'll (go) drink from the big pond at the gate (of the monastery)." When he went that (big pond) was also dried up. "This is impossible," he thought, "I must be deluded. But I'll still look into it." So he placed a large demarcation stone in the center (of the pond) and left.

[241] Again, he thought, "I'll drink from the Ganga (river)." But even this (river) had dried up. He reflected, "This is impossible. I must be deluded. But nonetheless I'll investigate it." So he wrapped his dharma robes around the trunk of a tree that was standing on the other shore of the Ganga (river) and left. Still suffering from thirst, he (went) to sleep. When he (went) to investigate in the morning, the stone was still in the copper tank, which was (now) filled with water. In the pond, (which was so deep) that no one could ever get out of it, a large demarcation stone was still there. And on the other shore of the Ganga (river) he saw his dharma robes wrapped around the trunk of the tree. So it is told. This is said to be the immediate ripening of the result of a minor obscuration (of withholding water from the saṃgha).

[242] With the thought that it might be of some benefit, I (Khenpo Kunpal) kindly request all those who have intimate and mutual relationships with the lama and the saṃgha, primarily those who hold high or low posts such as treasurers to the lama's monastery, larder managers [spyi khag], general managers [dkor gnyer], and others to consider what was said (above) and be heedful. I think that if they are not very careful and heedful about the general property of the (three) jewels, and especially about the property of the saṃgha, to which they are dangerously exposed [shin tu 'byung nye ba'i dkon mchog], they will certainly experience for many aeons unbearable suffering in hell such as being fried, burned and the like.

> inserted root text: stanza 31
>
> Whatever negative deeds I, the wicked one—
> (To whose mind) the stains of various mistakes cling—
> Have committed, (even) the most intolerable acts,
> I confess them to the guides of all.

[243] (And) likewise, **whatever negative deeds I**, the old evildoer, **the wicked one**—to whose mind the **stains of various mistakes** (carried out with) the three gates **cling**, and abide, like rust (clings) to iron—**have committed, (even) the most** grave misdeeds and **intolerable** negative **acts,** (those) which (cause) rebirth in the hell realms and so on, **I confess them** openly, one by one, to the buddhas and their sons, **to the guides of all**.

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> bdag ni sdig pa ma byang bar /
> sngon-du 'gum-par-'gyur du mchi /
> ji-ltar 'di las nges thar-bar /
> myur-ba'i tshul-gyis bskyab-tu-gsol /

[244] de-yang myur-du bshags dgos-pa'i rgyu-mtshan nam-'chi-cha-med 'chi-rkyen nges-pa-med-pas dus-de-ring-nyid-du mi 'chi-ba'i nges-pa-med la / shi na 'chi-kha gnad-gcod-kyi-sdug-bsngal / shi-nas bar-do'i-sdug-bsngal phyi-ma ngan-song-gi-sdug-bsngal thams-cad rgyu sdig-pa mi-dge-ba las byung-bas na rang gis sngar-byas kyi sdig-pa la 'gyod-sems dang / phyin-chad sdom-sems kyis gnyen-po dge-ba'i-las la ma 'bad na **bdag ni sdig-pa** byas-pa'i las-ngan bshags-pas **ma byang-bar sngon-du 'gum-par-'gyur-du-mchi** zhes 'chi-bar-'gyur la / sdig-pa ma bshags-par shi na ngan-song la-sogs-pa'i sdug-bsngal myong-bar-'gyur-bas na thabs **ji-ltar** sdig-pa 'di las rang-rgyud **nges**-par **thar-bar**-'gyur-ba zhig **myur** zhing rings-**ba'i-tshul gyis bskyab**-par-mdzad-**du-gsol** zhes so //

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> yid-brtan mi-rung 'chi-bdag 'di /
> byas dang ma byas mi sdod-pas /
> na dang mi na kun gyis kyang /
> glo-bur tshe la yid-mi-brtan /

[245] dus-nam-zhig-na 'chi-bar-'gyur na'ang / de-ring kho-nar sdig-pa bshags su mi khoms-pas de'i-bar-du 'chi-bar mi 'gyur ro snyams nas **yid-brtan** nam yid-ches bya **mi rung**-ba'i **'chi-bdag**-gi-bdud **'di** ni rang-gi sdig-bshags la-sogs-pa'i bya-ba'i mgo-brtsams zin-pa **byas**-pa **dang** ma brtsam-pa **ma byas**-pa da-gdod bya-bar 'dod-pa la-sogs-pa de dang de sgrub-pa'i bar-du **mi sdod-pas** gcong-can gcig gi tshe la gcong-med brgya zhes-pa ltar

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> I may well come to perish
> Before my wicked deeds have been purified.
> What then will liberate me with certainty from these?
> Please grant me your protection in a swift manner.

[244] The reason I should confess (my misdeeds) quickly is the uncertainty of death and the uncertainty of the circumstances of death. It is not even certain that I will not die today. Since the cause for all suffering—the suffering of being cut off from life at the moment of death when I die, the suffering of the intermediate state after death, and the suffering of the (three) lower realms in the next life—comes from negative deeds and non-virtuous actions, therefore, if I do not (develop) regret for my previously committed wicked deeds and do not endeavor in virtuous actions as the remedy with a mind that is resolved (not to repeat them) in the future, then **I may well come to perish**, meaning that I may die, **before** the accumulated bad karma that I have created due to **my wicked deeds has been purified** through confession. If I die without having confessed my wicked deeds, and if I experience the suffering of the (three) lower realms and the like, **what** method **will** then **liberate** my mind **with certainty from these** wicked deeds**? Please grant me your protection in a swift** and quick **manner.**

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> This unreliable (Māra of) Death
> Will not wait, (whether your tasks) are completed or not completed.
> Therefore, no one, neither the ill nor the healthy,
> Should place his trust in this fleeting life.

[245] You might think, "I will die at one point in time, but because today I simply have no time to confess my wicked deeds, I will not die until I have done so." But **this** Māra of **Death**, who is **unreliable** and untrustworthy, **will not wait** until you have accomplished this or that, like having begun or **completed** any actions such as confessing your negative (deeds), **or** (whether or not you have accomplished) what you wished to do later, what you have **not** yet begun or **completed**. As (one proverb) says: "Many a healthy person dies during the lifespan (remaining to) someone who is terminally ill."

[246] **na** ba **dang mi na** ba bde-bar-gnas-pa **kun gyis kyang** ste su yin kyang sprin-gseb kyi nyi-zhur dang rlung nang gi mar-me da-lta yod kyang glo-bur-du med-par-'gyur-ba lta-bu'i **glo-bur**-nyid-du mi 'chi-ba'i nges-pa-med-pas **tshe** 'di **la yid-mi-brtan** zhes de-ring kho-nar mi 'chi snyam-pa'i yid-brtan-bca' mi rung ste dus-nam 'chi gnas 'dir chi / 'chi-rkyen 'dis 'chi sogs nges-med-pas de-ring kho-nar mi 'chi-ba'i nges-pa-med de /

[247] klu'i-dbang-pos /

> tshe 'dir gnod mang rlung-gis-btab-pa yi //
> chu-yi chu-bur bas kyang mi-rtag na //
> dbugs-dbyung dbugs-rngub gnyid-kyis-log-pa las //
> sad-khoms gang lags de ni ngo-mtshar-che //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar ro //

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> thams cad bor te chas dgos par /
> bdag gis de ltar ma shes pas /
> mdza' dang mi mdza'i don gyi phyir /
> sdig pa rnam pa sna tshogs byas /

[248] gal-te shi-bar-gyur na sa-cha yul-ris gnyen-grogs srid-sde dgra-gnyen khyim-bza' tshang rgyu-longs-spyod tha-na rang-nyid kyi zas gos lus dang bcas-pa **thams-cad bor te** tshe-pha-rol-du rang-nyid gicg-pur **cha** zhes 'gro **dgos-par bdag gis** tshul **de-ltar ma shes-pas** mdza'-ba gnyen nye-ba grogs dga'-**mdza'** skyong-ba'i don **dang mi-mdza'i** don te mi-dza'-ba dgra rnams 'dul-ba'i **don gyi phyir** 'dod-chags dang zhe-sdang la-sogs-pa'i sgo-nas srog-gcod-pa ma-byin-pa-len-pa la-sogs **sdig-pa rnam-pa-du-ma byas** kyang don-med de

> inserted root text: stanza 35
>
> mi-mdza' rnams kyang med-'gyur zhing /
> mdza'-ba rnams kyang med-par-'gyur /
> bdag kyang med-par-'gyur-ba ste /
> de-bzhin thams-cad med-par-'gyur /

[246] Therefore, **no one**, whoever it may be, **neither the ill nor the healthy**, who live happily, **should place his trust in this life**, because in this **fleeting** (condition) there is no assurance that one will not die, just like a sunbeam that cracks the clouds, or a lamp in the wind, that exists now but suddenly ceases to exist. It is improper to place one's trust (in this fleeting life), thinking, "Today, at least, I will not die." It is uncertain when one will die, at which place one will die, through which circumstances one will die and so forth. Therefore, there is (also) no certainty about whether one will not simply die today.

[247] Nāgārjuna said:[36]

> Since life with its many ills is even more impermanent
> Than a wind-blown water bubble,
> That we still have the chance to inhale after exhaling or
> To wake up again after having fallen asleep is most amazing.

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> One must depart (alone), leaving all behind.
> But I, not understanding this,
> Have committed various kinds of negative deeds
> For the sake of friends and foes.

[248] When one comes to die, **one must depart** or go alone, by oneself, **leaving all behind**: one's place, country, relatives and friends, community, enemies and companions, family, possessions and riches or at the very least, one's own food and clothing, including one's own body. **But I, not understanding this** condition, for the sake of protecting **friends**, relatives, close ones, acquaintances, beloved ones, **and** for the sake of **foes**, that is to say **for the sake of** defeating foes and enemies, **have committed various kinds of negative deeds** such as killing, stealing and others, (motivated) by attachment, aversion and so forth. Yet, (such actions) are meaningless.

> inserted root text: stanza 35
>
> Foes will cease to be;
> Friends will cease to be;
> I too will cease to be;
> Likewise, everything will cease to be.

[36] *Suhṛl-lekha* [spring yig]. See Tibetan commentary page 68 and English translation page 80

[249] **mi-mdza'**-ba dgra rnams ma btul **kyang** shi-nas **med**-par-**'gyur zhing mdza'-ba** gnyen-grogs **rnams** bskyang **yang** phan-pa-med-par thams-cad shi nas **med-par-'gyur** la / der-ma-zad **bdag** rang-nyid **kyang** shi nas **med-par-'gyur-ba ste** / **de-bzhin**-du phyi-snod-kyi-'jig-rten ri gling la-sogs-pa dang / nang-bcud-kyi-'gro-ba dgra-gnyen-bar-ma'i 'gro-ba mthon-po gnam lta-bu / btsan-po thog lta-bu / phyug-po klu lta-bu / mdzes-pa lha lta-bu // 'phyor-po 'ja'-tshon lta-bu dang / brtegs-pa'i mkhar / bsogs-pa'i nor / 'dus-pa'i pha-ma / spun-zla la-sogs-pa **thams-cad med-par-'gyur**-bas na de-yi-don-du sdig-pa-byas-pa don-med do //

> inserted root text: stanza 36
>
> rmi-lam nyams-su-myong-ba bzhin /
> dngos-po gang-dang-gang spyad-pa /
> de de dran-pa'i-yul-du-'gyur /
> 'das-pa thams-cad mthong-mi-'gyur /

[250] de'i 'thad-pa dper-na mdang-gi-**rmi-lam** du gzugs la-sogs-pa'i 'dod-pa'i-yon-tan-lnga la longs-spyod-pa dang / dgra-'dul gnyen-skyong rnyed-bkur sogs gang-dang-gang **nyams-su-myong** yang da-nang sad-pa na dran-pa'i-yul-du-'gyur-ba-tsam las dngos-su mi mthong-**ba bzhin**-du khar-sang phan-chad kyi bya-ba gzugs sogs yul-lnga la blang-dor dgra-'dul gnyen-skyong tshong dang so-nams rnyed-bkur snyan-grags zas gos longs spyod la-sogs-pa'i **dngos-po gang-dang-gang** 'dod cing longs-**spyad-pa de** dang **de** thams-cad de-ring 'di dang 'di-'dra myong ngo zhes // **dran-pa'i-yul**-tsam **du 'gyur** srid-pa las sngar **'das** shing 'gag zin-**pa** de **thams-cad** da-lta **mthong** zhing phan-gnod nyams-su-myong-bar **mi 'gyur**-bas de-dag gi don-byas-pa don-med do //

> inserted root text: stanza 37
>
> re-zhig gson-tshe 'di-nyid la'ang /
> mdza' dang mi-mdza' du-ma 'das /
> de-dag don-du byas-pa'i sdig /
> mi-bzad gang-yin mdun-na-gnas /

[249] Even though I did not defeat my **foes** and enemies, they **will** (eventually) die and **cease to be**. And even though I cared for my **friends**, relatives and associates, they did not benefit me (truly), and they **will** (eventually) die and all **cease to be**. Not only that, even **I too will** (eventually) die myself and **cease to be**. **Likewise**, the external universe, the world with Sumeru, the continents and so forth, the beings contained in it, enemies, relatives, neutral people; those as high as the sky, those as fierce as lightning, those rich like the nāgas, those beautiful like the gods, those lovely like a rainbow, fortresses that have been erected, wealth that has been accumulated, fathers and mothers who are united, brothers and sisters and so forth; **everything will cease to be**. Therefore, commiting negative deeds for their sake is pointless.

> inserted root text: stanza 36
>
> Just like an experience in a dream,
> Whatever things I have enjoyed
> Have become a (mere) object of memory of 'this and that'.
> I will not see (again) anything that has passed.

[250] The reason for this, for example (is that) regardless of whatever **experience** I had **in** yesterday's **dream**—such as enjoying the five sense pleasures of (beautiful) sights and so forth, subduing my enemies, supporting my relatives, (achieving) gain, honor and the like—when I awoke this morning, I could in reality perceive nothing (of it) and it became **just like** a mere object of memory. (Likewise, all) activities until yesterday in regard to the five objects such as sights and so forth, **whatever things I have** desired and **enjoyed**—such as accepting and rejecting, subduing enemies, supporting relatives, business and work in the fields, gain and honor, fame, food, clothing, riches and so forth—about all **this and that** I can say, "That day I enjoyed this and that," and (these experiences) **have become** nothing but **a** mere **object of memory**. **I will** now neither **see** again nor experience any harm or benefit (from) **anything that has passed** and ended. Therefore, giving meaning to those goals was meaningless.

> inserted root text: stanza 37
>
> Even within this very life, while I am briefly alive,
> Many friends and foes have passed,
> But whatever unbearable negative deeds I have committed for their sake,
> (The karmic ripening of these deeds) remains ahead of me.

[251] tshe-rabs-snga-ma rnams kyi dgra-gnyen lta-ci **re-zhig** da-lta **gson**-pa'i **tshe 'di-nyid la'ang mdza'**-ba **dang mi-ndza'-ba du-ma** mang-po zhig **'das**-pa ste shi nas dran-yul-tsam-du-gyur-pa las de-dag gis dngos-su phan-gnod cung-zad med do // 'o-na de-dag gi don-du sdig-pa-byas-pa'ang 'das te mi gnod do snyam na // de ni ma yin te 'di-ltar mdza'-ba dang mi-mdza'-ba **de-dag** gi **don-du** chags-sdang sogs la brten nas **byas-pa'i sdig**-pa rnam-smin **mi-bzad**-pa myong-bar-'gyur-ba **gang-yin**-pa de ni lus dang grib-ma bzhin-du mi 'bral-bar **mdun-na** sgugs-pa bzhin-du **gnas** te //

[252] rgyal-po-la-gdams-par /

> dus-kyi-nyen te rgyal-po 'gro-'gyur na //
> 'khor dang longs-spyod gnyen-bshes rjes-mi-'brang //
> skyes-bu de ni gang-dang-gang skyes kyang //
> las ni grib-ma bzhin-du rjes-su-'brang //

zhes-pa ltar dang /

[253] mdun-na gnas-pa yang dge-sdig gi 'bras-bu gang-yin yang de-bzhin-gshegs-pas dga'-bo sum-cu-rtsa-gsum-gyi-lha-yul dang dmyar-bar khrid-par-mdzad-pas de-dang-der kho-rang skye-ba'i-gnas lha'i-khang-bzang dang dmyal-ba'i-me dang zangs-khar la-sogs-pa mthong-ba dang / khyim-bdag mdangs-ldan gyis sangs-rgyas la kun-dga'-ra-ba phul rgyu'i thig-gdab-pa na de'i rnam-par-smin-pa'i 'bras-bu da-lta-nas grub-par sha-ri'i-bus gsungs-pa bzhin te /

[254] dper-na da-lta bla-chen mi-chen gang-du 'gro-bar grva-'khor rnams kyis gzhi-btang nas thab-bzungs[37] te bsur-'ong-ba bzhin-du rang-rang-gi-las-snang sdig-can rnams la dmyal-ba la-sogs-par gshin-rje'i-las-mkhan rnams kyis bsu-ma-'ong nas 'khrid-par snang-ba dang / dge-ba-can rnams dag-pa'i-gnas su lha dang bla-mas bsu zhing khrid-pa snang-ba 'byung-bar gsungs-pa lta-bu'o //

> inserted root text: 38
>
> de-ltar bdag ni glo-bur zhes /
> bdag gis rtogs-pas ma gyur-pas /
> gti-mug chags dang zhe-sdang gis /
> sdig-pa rnam-pa du-ma byas /

---

[37] B: thabs bzungs

[251] Putting aside my enemies and relatives of former lifetimes, **even within this very life**, **while I am** presently **briefly alive**, **many friends and foes have passed** away**,** have died, and other than being a mere memory, they cannot really help or harm me in the slightest. I might think, "Whatever negative deeds I committed for their sake have passed and can't harm me." But that is not so. I will have to experience the **unbearable** (karmic) ripening, **whatever** it may be, of **negative deeds** which **I committed for their sake,** (for the sake of) these friends and foes based on attachment and aversion. (The karmic ripening of these deeds) will be as inseparable from me as my body from its shadow, and **will remain before me** like someone lying in wait.

[252] From the Sūtra of Instructions to the King:

> Endangered by the time (of death), when (you) the king must go (to the next life),
> Neither your entourage and riches nor your family and friends will follow you.
> Wherever people take rebirth,
> Karma follows them like their shadow.

[253] (The ripening of your deeds) remains ahead of you, whatever the fruition of your good and negative deeds may be. When the Bhagavān took (his cousin) Nanda to the celestial realm of the thirty-three [trayastriṃśa] and to the hell realms, (Nanda) saw here and there his own (future) places of rebirth, a beautiful celestial palace, the fire of the hell realms, the copper pot (of the hell realms) and so on. Or as when the sponsor named Śuka [mdangs ldan] took the measurements of a park he was to offer to the Buddha, and Śāriputra said that the result of the (karmic) ripening of this (act of generosity) would be accomplished during (Śuka's) present (lifetime).

[254] For example, just as when great lamas and celebrities [mi chen], wherever they travel, have their monks and entourage (go ahead to) set up a residence, build the hearth, and welcome them, similarly, in (people's) own karmic perception, the wicked ones will perceive being welcomed [bsu ma 'ong] and taken to the hell realms and other (places) by the henchmen of the Lord of Death, while those who have practiced virtue will perceive being welcomed and taken by gods and lamas to the pure realms. So it is said.

> inserted root text: stanza 38
>
> Thus, as I did not realize
> That I am ephemeral,
> I committed many forms of negative deeds
> Out of ignorance, attachment and aversion.

[255] de-dag gi don bsdu na **de-ltar bdag ni** nam-gzhug gi bung-ba'am 'gron-po lta-bu **glo-bur**-ba sngar gang-nas 'ong-ba dang da gang-du 'gro-ba cha-med cing myur-ba-nyid-du med-par-'gyur-ba zhig yin no **zhes bdag gis rtogs**-pa'am shes-**par ma gyur-pas** rtag-'dzin a-'thas shing blang-dor la rmongs-pa'i **gti-mug** dang rang-phyogs dang 'dod-pa'i-don la 'dod-**chags**-pa **dang** / gzhan-phyogs dang mi-'dod-pa'i-gnas la **zhe-sdang gis** srog-bcod-pa dang ma-byin-pa-len-pa la-sogs-pa'i **sdig-pa rnam-pa** mi-'dra-ba **du-ma byas** shing bsags na

> inserted root text: stanza 39
>
> nyin mtshan sdod-pa yong-med-par /
> tshe-'di rtag-tu god-'gyur zhing /
> snon-pa gud-nas 'ong-med na /
> bdag lta 'chi-bar cis-mi-'gyur /

[256] dus da-lta-nyid-du ma bshags na tshe ni snon-med 'grib-pa dang bcas-pas ltag-chu chad-pas rdzing-bu bzhin-du **nyin**-mo dang **mtshan**-mo dus-skad-cig snga-phyi rim-gyis 'ong nas tshe-'dzad-pa las dus-skad-cig-ma-tsam-du-yang tshe mi 'dzad-par **sdod-pa** yi go-skabs **yong**-ye-**med-par tshe 'di** dus-**rtag-tu god** ces 'grib-par-**'gyur zhing** sman-pa'i-rgyal-po dngos-su byon gyur kyang / tshe-yi-'phen-zad srog la mthud-du-med / ces gsungs-pa ltar tshe la **snon-pa gud nas** te gzhan-zhig-nas **'ong**-ba **med na** 'khor-ba'i-sems-can **bdag** dang bdag **lta-bu** nges-par-**'chi-bar cis mi 'gyur** te nges-par 'chi-bar-'gyur-bas sdig-pa-bshags-pa la 'bad-par-bya dgos te /

[257] mi-rtag-pa'i-gtam las /

ltag-chu bcad-pa'i rdzing bzhin-du //
snon-med 'grib-pa dang bcas-pas //
kun kyang 'chi-ba'i lam-zhugs na //
glo-bur tshe la su yid-brtan //

zhes-pa ltar ro //

> inserted root text: stanza 40
>
> bdag ni mal na 'dug bzhin-du /
> gnyen-bshes kun gyis mtha'-bskor kyang /
> srog-'chad-pa yi tshor-ba dag /
> bdag-nyid gcig-pus myong-bar-'gyur /

[255] If one condenses the meaning of (all) that (has been explained above): "**Thus, I am ephemeral**, someone who will quickly cease to be, just like a seasonal bee or a guest, not knowing where I previously came from and where I will now go." **As I did not realize** or understand (this transient condition), **I committed** and accumulated **many** different **forms of negative deeds**, such as killing, stealing and the like, **out of ignorance**, firmly believing in permanence and being ignorant about what to do and what to avoid, out of **attachment** to my own group and to what I wanted, **and** out of **aversion** to other groups and what I did not want.

> inserted root text: stanza 39
>
> Remaining neither day nor night,
> This life is constantly slipping away.
> And since (life) is never getting any longer,
> Why would death not come to one like me?

[256] If I do not confess (all this) right now, (there will not be much time left) as my life is not getting longer but shorter. Just like a pond cut off from its water supply, life is dwindling **day and night**, from moment to moment, and never—not even for one single moment—by any chance **remaining** and not dwindling. "**This life is constantly slipping away**" means it is decreasing, **and** even if the king of all physicians, (the Medicine Buddha), would appear in person, he would say, "Once the (karmic) thrust of a lifespan is exhausted, life cannot be prolonged." **Since** life **is never getting any longer** but only shorter, **why would death not** certainly **come to** a saṃsāric being such as myself, **one like me**? (Therefore,) as I will certainly die, I should endeavor to confess my negative deeds.

[257] The *Anityārtha-parikathā* states:

Just like a pond cut off from its water supply
Will not increase but only decrease,
Since we all have entered the path toward death,
Who would place his trust in this fleeting life?

> inserted root text: stanza 40
>
> While I am lying in bed,
> Even though (I am) surrounded by my friends and relatives,
> I alone will experience
> The feeling of life being severed.

[258] de-ltar tshe-zad nas 'chi tshe **bdag ni mal**-sa'i-tha-ma **na** nyal nas **'dug bzhin-du gnyen** nye-ba pha-ma spun-sring **bshes**-grogs dga'-mdza' dang sman-pa la-sogs-pa **kun gyis mtha'** thams-cad **bskor** zhing rang 'chir-'jug thub-pa lta-bu'i sdug-bsngal gyis gdung bzhin-du bsrung-bar-byas **kyang** phan-pa-med-par **srog-'chad-pa yi** gnad-gcod-kyi-sdug-sngal bzod-par-dka'-ba'i **tshor-ba** drag-po **dag** sus-kyang mi len-par **bdag** rang-**nyid gcig-pus** nyams-su-**myong-bar-'gyur** zhing

> inserted root text: stanza 41
>
> gshin-rje'i-pho-nyas zin-pa la /
> gnyen gyis ci-phan bshes ci-phan /
> de-tshe bsod-nams gcig skyabs na /
> de-yang bdag gis ma bsten to /

[259] thim-rim-dus las-ngan 'khrul-pa'i rang-gzugs su rung-ba'i **gshin-rje'i-pho-nyas** mngon-sum-du **zin** te zhags-nag gis ske-bcings nas rang gcig-pur tho-bas-brdung-ba la-sogs-pa'i sdug-bsngal gtad bzhin khrid-**pa la** pha-ma bu-tsha sogs nye-ba **gnyen gyis ci-zhig phan** zhing grogs dga'-mdza'i **bshes** rnams kyis kyang **ci-zhig phan te** sus-kyang skyob-par mi nus kyi // **dus-de**-yi-**tshe bsod-nams** dge-ba zhig bsags shing 'grub yod na de-nyid **gcig**-pu kho-na **skyabs** kyi mchog-tu-'gyur-ba yin-**na**-yang **de-yang bdag gis** sngar **ma bsten to** zhes sngar ma bsags-pas da ni ci-byar-yod de

> inserted root text: stanza 42
>
> mgon-po bag-med bdag gis ni /
> 'jigs-pa 'di-'dra ma 'tshal nas /
> mi-rtag tshe-'di'i-ched-dag-tu /
> sdig-pa mang-po nye-bar-bsgrubs /

[260] thugs snying-rje-chen-po dang ldan-pa rgyal-ba sras-bcas la **mgon-po** zhes sdug-bsngal gyis 'o-dod-bos te blang-dor la rmongs shing rgyu-'bras-yid-ches-pa'i-dad-pa med pas sgo-gsum **bag-med** kyi dbang-du-songs-ba las-ngan-po **bdag gis ni** 'chi-kha-gnad-gcod-kyi-'jigs-pa / shi nas bar-do'i-'jigs-pa phyi ma ngan-song-gi-**'jigs-pa 'di-'dra** yod-pa **ma 'tshal** te ma shes **nas mi-rtag**-pa snying-po-med-pa tshe **'di'i** dgra-'dul gnyen-skyong zas nor longs-spyod kyi **ched-dag-tu** srog-gcod-pa la-sogs-pa'i **sdig-pa mang-po nye-bar**-bsags shing **bsgrub** na

[258] In this way, as my life is running out and I am dying, **while I am lying** down and resting **in** my death**bed**, **even though** I am completely **surrounded by** all my intimate **relatives**, father, mother, brothers and sisters, **friends** and helpers, loved ones, doctors and others, and (though) they (try) to protect me, tormenting themselves with suffering, as if they could die instead of me, it is of no avail. **I alone will experience** the intense **feeling**, which no one wants, which is hard to endure, the suffering **of life being severed**, of being cut off from life.

> inserted root text: stanza 41
>
> When captured by the messengers of the Lord of Death,
> What benefit will relatives afford? What benefit will friends afford?
> At that time (my) merit should protect me,
> But upon that I have never relied.

[259] At the time (when my elements) successively dissolve, **when** I am actually being **captured by the messengers of the Lord of Death**, the frightening and deluded manifestations of my bad karma, they will lead me away while making me suffer by binding me with black ropes around my waist, beating me alone with hammers, and so on. **What benefit will** close **relatives** such as parents, children and grandchildren **afford**? **What benefit will friends** such as helpers, loved ones and intimate ones **afford**? None of them will be able to protect me. **At that time**, if I have gathered or accomplished **merit** or virtue, then that alone **should protect me** the best. "**But upon that I have never relied** before." That is to say "because I did not accumulate (merit) previously, what can I do now?"

> inserted root text: stanza 42
>
> Protectors! I, so heedless,
> Unaware of such terror as this,
> Committed many a negative deed
> For the sake of this transient life.

[260] Lamenting in misery I cry out, "**Protectors**" those endowed with great compassion, to the victors and their sons. I was ignorant about what to do and what to avoid and had no faith of conviction in (the law of) cause and effect. Being **so heedless** with the three gates, **I**, due to my bad karma, **unaware**, meaning ignorant, of the existence **of such** things as the fear of being severed from life at the moment of death, the horrors of the intermediate state after death, and the **terrors** of the lower realms in the next life, accumulated and **committed many a negative deed** by killing and so forth **for the sake of** riches, defeating enemies, and protecting relatives in **this transient** and meaningless **life**.

> inserted root text: stanza 43
>
> skye-po yan-lag-gcod-pa'i-sar /
> de-ring khrid-pa'ang bred-'gyur te /
> kha-skam mig-rtsa-ngan la-sogs /
> snga-las-gzhan-du-'gyur snang na /

[261] 'chi-ba'i tshe shin-tu sdug-bsngal gyis gzir zhing nyams-thag-par-'gyur te / dper-na rgyal-po'i chad-pa-phog-pa la shin-tu nyes-can-gyi-**skye-bo** mi 'ga'-zhig rkang-lag sogs **yan-lag** tsam **gcod-pa'i-sar** skal-ba mnyam-pa'i mi rnams kyis **de-ring** lta-bur **khrid-pa**'ang shin-tu 'jigs shing skrag nas **bred**-par-**'gyur te kha**-gdang zhing **skams**-pa dang **mig-rtsa-ngan**-pa sngo-cer-re mgo-'phang-dma'-ba **la-sogs**-pa **snga las** te sngar-gyi-mi de ma yin-pa lta-bu **gzhan-du-'gyur** te shin-tu nyams-thag-par **snang na** /

> inserted root text: stanaz 44
>
> gshin-rje'i-pho-nya 'jigs-'jigs lta'i /
> sha-tshugs-can gyis bzung-gyur cing /
> 'jigs-chen nad-kyis-thebs-gyur pa /
> rab-tu nyam-thag smos-ci-dgos /

[262] las-ngan 'khrul-pa'i rang-gzugs **gshing-rje'i-pho-nya** las-mkhan ma-rung-ba rnams ni mi las bdun-'gyur las che-ba gcer-bu skra spyi-bor gzengs-pa mig gru-gsum shel-mig ltar bgrad-pa ang-gtsigs bsdam zhing so-zho-ngoms te bshugs-pa'i 'thor-rlung drag-tu 'bud-pa rgyud khro zhing gtum-pa lcags-kyu dang zhags-pa tho-ba dang dgra-stva la-sogs-pa thogs-pa srin-po ltar rab-tu **'jigs-'jigs lta'i** ste 'jigs-'jigs lta-bur gyur-pa'i khro-gnyer dang **sha-tshugs** sna-tshogs-**can gyis bzung** ste zhags-pas bcing nas rang-nyid gcig-pur tshe-phyi-mar khrid-par-**gyur cing**

[263] dmyal-ba'i-snang-ba lcags-bsreg-gi-thang la-sogs-par nyams-nga-bar 'jigs-pa'i-mun-nag gis mdun-nas-bsus / las-kyi-rlung-dmar gyis rgyab-nas-ded de gshing-rje'i-las-mkhan rnams kyis rgyob-rgyob dang sod-sod chod-chod kyis sgra-chen-po-sgrogs bzhin-du lcags-kyus-bzung / tho-bas brdeg rkang-lag gcod-pa la-sogs-pa'i **'jigs**-pa **chen**-po'i **nad**-drag-po rnams **kyis thebs**-par-**gyur-pa** de-yi-tshe **rab-tu**-bred cing sdug-bsngal gyis **nyams-thag**-par-'gyur-pa **smos**-kyang-**ci-dgos** /

> inserted root text: stanza 43
>
> If those people, who are led today
> To the place where their limbs will be amputated, are petrified,
> With parched mouths (and) glazed eyes,
> Appearing different than before,

[261] Therefore, when I die I will be miserable, tormented by extreme suffering. For instance, **if those** few humans who are sentenced to the king's punishment, **people** (accused) of severe wrongdoing, who are **led today** by their fellow humans **to the place where their limbs,** their hands and feet, **will be amputated**, **are petrified**, extremely horrified and frightened, **with** their **mouths** gaping and **parched**, with **glazed eyes** cyanic blue, their heads kept down and so forth, **appearing** very miserable and **different than before**, no longer the same people as they once were …

> inserted root text: stanza 44
>
> Then needless to mention (my) tremendous despair
> When taken by the physical forms
> Of the fearsome looking messengers of the Lord of Death,
> When (I am thus) stricken with the disease of great panic.

[262] (then, when I am) **taken by** the individual and deluded manifestations of my own negative karma, the various **physical forms of the** wild **messengers** and henchmen **of the Lord of Death,** who—seven times taller than human beings, naked, their hair standing on end, their triangular eyes staring like glass eyes, pressing their upper teeth on their lower lips and baring their upper teeth, blowing a strong, whistling whirlwind, their minds angry and fierce, carrying iron hooks, ropes, hammers, hatchets and the like, and who are most **fearsome looking** like demons, meaning (with) angry grimaces which are similarly frightful looking—tie me up with ropes and lead me alone to my next life;

[263] when from before me, I, the miserable one,[38] am met by a terrifying darkness, the visions of hell such as plains of melted iron and the like; when from behind, I am driven by the red wind of karma, while the henchmen of the Lord of Death shout with powerful voices, "Hit, hit, kill, kill, cut, cut!"; **when** (I am thus) **stricken with the** ferocious **disease of great panic** as they clasp me with iron hooks, beat me with hammers, cut off my arms and legs and so forth, then **needless** even **to mention** that I will at that moment be **tremendously** petrified and **in despair.**

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[38] Feeling 'miserable' [nyams nga ba] or depressed [skyo bo] is the mental sensation [sems kyi tshor ba] of those who experience the intermediate state.

> inserted root text: stanza 45
>
> su-zhig 'jigs-chen 'di las bdag /
> legs-par skyob-par-byed-'gyur zhes /
> bred-sha-thon-pa'i mig-bgrad nas /
> phyogs-bzhir skyabs dag tshol-bar-byed /

[264] dus-de'i-tshe bla-ma lha-rje sogs snying-rje-can **su-zhig** gis 'chi-kha-gnad-gcod dang gshin-rje'i-las-mkhan la-sogs-pa'i **'jigs**-pa **chen**-po **'di** rnams **las** nyams-thag **bdag legs-par-skyob-par-byed**-par-**'gyur zhes** smra zhing shin-tu skrag nas **bred-sha-thon-pa'i** ste skyi-bung zhes mgo-lpags kun ltag-par-bsdus te **mig**-sngo-cer-re gcer zhing zum-du-med par **bgrad nas** kha shar la-sogs-pa'i **phyogs-bzhir** ltas te **skyabs**-mkhan **gzhan**-dag **'tshol-bar-byed** la

> inserted root text: stanza 46
>
> phyogs-bzhir skyabs-med mthong nas ni /
> de-nas kun-tu yi-mug-'gyur /
> gnas der skyabs yod-ma-yin na /
> de-tshe bdag gis ji-ltar bya /

[265] de-ltar nan-tan-gyis **phyogs-bzhir** btsal yang rang-byas-kyi-las-ngan myong-ba la sangs-rgyas kyi skyob-par mi nus-par lhas-sbyin gyis go'u-ta-ma tshig-thal tshig-thal zhes smre-sngags-'don bzhin-du dmyal-bar skyes-pa lta-bu yin-pas na **skyabs**-mkhan gcig-kyang-**med**-par **mthong nas ni** / de-nas skyabs ma rnyed-pas **kun-tu yi-mug-par-'gyur** te

[266] skye dka'-ba lho-rgyal-'dzam-bu-gling du skyes / thob dka'-ba'i dal-'byor-gyi-mi-lus thob / mjal-bar dka'-ba'i bla-ma dam-pa dang mjal / 'phrad-par dka'-ba'i dam-pa'i-chos dang 'phrad de blang-dor-gyi-gnas cung-zad shes-par-gyur kyang / kye-ma-kye-hud las-ngan skal-chad-po bdag gis dge-ba ni ma 'grub / sdig-pa ni rgya-chen-po byas / da ni skyabs-bral zhing mgon-med-pas 'chi thag-chod cing ngan-song du 'gro rgyu las mi 'dug snyam du sngar-byas kyi sdig-pa dran te brang-sen-rjes-kyis-bkang ste gdong-sngo-lam-me mig-mchi-ma-khra-thar-re dbugs-'dar zhing mgo rkang-lag g.yo-ba bzhin tshe-pha-rol du 'gro zhing sdug-bsngal-bar-'gyur te /

> inserted root text: stanza 45
>
> Who can really protect me
> From this great horror?
> With eyes gaping in an expression of terror
> I will search the four quarters for refuge.

[264] At that time, in intense fear, I will ask, "**Who** is the compassionate one among the teachers, physicians, and others who **can really protect me**, a miserable person, **from this great horror** of my life being severed at the moment of death, (from) the henchmen of the Lord of Death, and so forth**?**" **With eyes gaping**, staring glazed over in cyanic blue and impossible to close, **in an expression of terror** so that the skin of my skull is gathered at the back of my head, **I** will look around **in the four quarters** such as east and **will search for** someone who can grant me **refuge**.

> inserted root text: stanza 46
>
> Seeing no refuge in the four quarters
> I will become completely depressed.
> If there is no refuge on that occasion,
> Then what should I do at that time?

[265] Although I search eagerly **in the four quarters**, I must endure the bad karma that I have myself created, just as Devadatta uttered lamentations, saying, "Gautama! I burn, I am ablaze," when he took rebirth in hell and even the Buddha could not protect him. Therefore, **seeing no** one who can grant **refuge**, not finding any refuge, **I will become completely depressed**.

[266] "I have taken rebirth in Jambudvīpa, (the domain of the) Southern King (Virūḍhaka), where it is difficult to take rebirth. I have obtained a human body endowed with the freedoms and advantages, which is difficult to obtain. I have found a sublime master, which is difficult to find. I have met the sublime dharma, which is difficult to meet. I even gained a little understanding of what to do and what to avoid. But alas, I, the unfortunate person of bad karma, did not practice virtue but committed great negativity. Now I am without a refuge and without a protector. As I am certain to die, I have nowhere else to go but to the lower realms." Thinking this, I remember the negative deeds that I committed previously. My chest covered with scratches, my face bright blue, tears pouring from my eyes, my breath shaky and my head, legs and arms trembling, I will go to the next life and suffer.

[267] rgyal-po-gdams-pa'i-mdo las / 'gro-ba gzhan-du ni 'gro // mal-gyi-tha-mar ni nyal // srog ni cung-zad-gcig lus // gshin-rje'i-skyes-bus ni 'jigs shing skrag // byur gyi dbang-du-ni-song // dbugs-kyi-'gyu-ba ni 'chad / kha dang sna ni gdangs / so ni gtsigs / pha-ma dang phu-nu dang sring-mo dang bu dang bu-mos ni bskor / nor rnams bgo-bsha'-bya zhes ni zer / kye-hud-pha kyi-hud-ma kyi-hud-bu zhes zer na chos ma-gtogs-pa skyabs gzhan-med / mgon gzhan-med / gnas gzhan-med / dpung-gnyen gzhan-med / rgyal-po chen-po de'i-tshe de'i-dus-na chos ni gling dang gnas dang mgon dang ston-par-'gyur ro zhes gsungs pa ltar ro //

[268] de-ltar 'chi-ba'i **gnas**-skabs **der** dam-pa'i-chos dge-ba ma-gtogs-pa **skyabs** gzhan gcig-kyang **yod**-pa **ma yin na de-tshe** las-ngan-po **bdag gis ji-ltar bya** ste ci-yang bya-thabs-med-pas shin-tu sdug-bsngal gyis gdung zhing nyams-thag-par-'gyur ro //

[269] gnyis-pa rten-gyi-stobs ni / rten-gyi-stobs zhes bshags-yul-du-byed-pa dang / dag-rten-tu-byed-pa gnyis las 'dir phyi-ma ste /

> inserted root text: stanza 47
>
> de-bas rgyal-ba 'gro-ba'i-mgon /
> 'gro-ba skyob-pa'i don-brtson-pa /
> stobs-chen 'jigs-pa kun sel la /
> de-ring-nyid-nas skyabs-su-mchi /

[270] de-ltar 'chi zhing las-ngan 'khrul-pa'i rang-gzugs gshin-rje'i-bsu-ma-sleb-pa na skrag nas da-gzod skyabs-'tshol kyang mi rnyed-par **de**-lta-**bas**-na **rgyal-ba** rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas **'gro-ba** ma-lus-pa'i **mgon-po** nam-mkha' dang mnyam-pa'i **'gro-ba** sems-can thams-cad sdug-bsngal mtha'-dag las **skyob-pa'i don**-du dang-po byang-chub-mchog-tu-thugs-bskyed-pa nas gzhan-don 'ba'-zhig la **brtson-pa** mthar-phyin-pa'i **stobs**-bcu'i-dbang-phyug-**chen**-po sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das te

[271] de la de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i stobs kyi rnam-grangs la yab dang yum las byung-ba'i stobs dang / rdzu-'phrul gyi dang / ye-shes-kyi-stobs la-sogs-pa mang-du gsungs-pa las / yab-dang-yum-las-byung-ba'i-stobs ni de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i phyag-zhabs sogs kyi tshig bar re na sred-med-bu'i-stobs brgya'am lnga-brgya re yod-par mdo las gsungs shing /

[267] As it is said in the *Rājāvavādaka-sūtra*: "(All) beings (eventually) have to die. Lying on your deathbed and with a little bit of life remaining, you are horrified and frightened by the henchmen of the Lord of Death and you have (already) fallen under the power of despair. The (gross) movement of your breath has ceased. Your mouth and nose are open, and you press your teeth together. Your parents, elder and younger brothers, sisters, sons and daughters will surround you and say, "Let's divide his wealth!" When they say, "Alas, Father! Alas, Mother!" or "Alas, Children!" you (know) that, besides the dharma, there is no refuge, no protector, no resort, and no support. Great King, at that time the dharma becomes an island, a resort, a protector and a teacher."

[268] Thus, **if on that occasion** of death **there is no** single **refuge** other than virtue, the sublime dharma, **then at that time what should I**, the one with bad karma, **do**? As there is nothing at all that can be done, I will be tormented by suffering and will be miserable.

The power of support

[269] Second, the power of support. That which is called the power of support can function as the object of confession, and it can function as the object of purification. Of these two (what is explained) here it is the latter.

> inserted root text: stanza 47
>
> Therefore, from today onward I go for refuge
> To the Victor, the protector of beings,
> Who strives to shelter all beings
> And with great power eradicates all fear.

[270] Once I have thus died and the invitation of the Lord of Death—the personification of my deluded bad karma—has arrived, even if at that point [da bzod] I search for a refuge, I will not find one. **Therefore**, since **the Victor**, the perfect Buddha, **the protector of** all **beings**, first developed supreme bodhicitta in order **to shelter all beings**, sentient beings, equal to the reaches of space, from limitless suffering, **he strives** exclusively for the benefit of others and is the **great** sovereign of the ultimate ten **power**s, the Buddha, the Bhagavān.

[271] Much can be said about the enumeration of the Tathāgata's powers such as the strength he inherited from his father and mother, his magical powers, his wisdom powers and so on. The sūtras explain that the power he inherited from his father and mother is such that in each tendon of his arms and legs he has one hundred or five hundred times the strength of Nārāyaṇa.[39]

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[39] Nārāyaṇa [sred med bu] is an epithet for Viṣṇu [khyab 'jug].

[272] rdo-'phan-pa'i-mdo las / de-bzhin-gshegs-pa ku-shi'i-grong-khyer du byon-pa na yul de'i gyad lnga-brgya re-re la 'khor lnga-brgya re dang ldan-pas lam phyags-dar sogs byed-pa na de-dag gis gzhan-du 'phan-par ma theg-pa'i rdo-pha-vang chen-po de-bzhin-gshegs-pa'i zhabs g.yas-pa'i mthe-bong gis phyung ste phyag gis nam-mkhar 'phang-ba yab-dang-yum-las-byung-ba'i-stobs dang / rdzu-'phrul gyis de rdul-phran-du-byas nas phyogs thams-cad du gtor-ba dang / de-ltar gyur-pa la gyad rnams mi dga'-bar-gyur-pa la rdul-phran rnams slar-bsdus te snga-ma-bzhin-du mdzad nas gnas dben-par bzhag-par-mdzad-pa bsgom-pa'am ye-shes-kyi-stobs zhes-bya-bar gsungs /

[273] khyad-par sems-can thams-cad skyob-pa'i-stobs dngos ni / ji-skad-du /

> gnas-dang-gnas-min rnam-smin dbang-po dang //
> khams dang mos-pa-sna-tshogs kun-'gro'i-lam //
> bsam-gtan sngon-gnas-rjes-dran lha-yi-mig //
> zag-zad mkhyen pa'i-stobs dang bcu yin no //

zhes gsung-pa ltar

[274] mkhyen-pa'i-stobs-bcu mnga'-bas dam-pa'i-chos yang-dag-par ston-par-mdzad-pa'i sangs-rgyas dang / de'i bka'-bzhin rang gis bsgrub na 'khor-ba dang ngan-song la-sogs-pa'i sdug-bsngal gyi **'jigs-pa** ma-lus **kun sel**-bar-mdzad-pa de **la** / blang-dor la rmongs-pa'i skye-po mdo-shor rnams kyis ni tshe-gang sdig-pa mi-dge-ba 'ba'-zhig byas-byas nas sang 'chi tshe 'jigs-skrag gis ci-bya-med-par skyabs-'tshol-bar-byed kyang phan-par dka' zhing 'phyi-bar-gyur-pa de-dag gi lad-mo mi byed-par bdag gis ni **dus-de-ring-nas** nang-snga-mo chos thos na snga-mo // nyin-gung chos thos na nying-gung / dgongs-mo chos thos na dgongs-mo nyin-nas-bzung ste byang-chub-syning-po la mchis-kyi-bar-du sangs-rgyas la ston-pa'i-tshul-du **skyabs-su-mchi'o** zhes bsam dgos te /

> inserted root text: stanza 48
>
> de yi thugs-su-chud-pa'i chos /
> 'khor-ba'i-'jigs-pa sel-ba dang /
> byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs la yang /
> de-bzhin yang-dag skyabs-su-mchi /

[275] chos la thos-bsam-bsgom-gsum 'dres-mar-byed dgos te / chos-'chad-pa'i dus lta-bu yin kyang tshig-sgros-snyan-snyan mi byed-par don sems-pa'i zhor la bshad na bsgom yang de yin gsungs //

[272] The *Śilākṣipta-sūtra* recounts that once when the Tathāgata went to the city of Kuśinagara, five hundred Mallas from that area, each with an entourage of five hundred (men), were sweeping the road. With the big toe of his right foot the Tathāgata raised a great boulder that they could not lift and throw elsewhere, throwing it into the air with his hand. This is the strength that he inherited from his father and mother. With his magical power he reduced (the boulder) to particles of dust and scattered them in all directions. Since the strong men did not like (the boulder) being thus transformed, (the Tathāgata) gathered the dust particles, reconstituted (the boulder) as it was before, and placed it at a remote location. This is said to be the power of his meditation, or of his wisdom.

[273] In particular, his actual power to shelter all living beings is (explained) like this:

> The power of (1) knowing what is accurate and what is inaccurate, (2) the ripening of karma, (3) the faculties,
> (4) The dispositions, (5) the various inclinations, (6) the different paths,
> (7) Concentration, (8) recollecting former existences, (9) the divine eye
> And (10) the exhaustion of defilements, ten in all.

[274] Being endowed with the ten powers of knowledge, the Buddha can teach the sublime dharma in a perfect way. If one practices according to his instructions, (his dharma) **eradicates all fear** of suffering such as saṃsāra, the lower realms and so forth. Superficial people, ignorant about what to do and what to avoid, commit only negative deeds and non-virtuous actions for their entire lives. When they die tomorrow in horror and fear, they will not know what to do; even if they search for a refuge, it will be difficult to benefit them since it is too late. Without imitating these (people), one should think, "**I go for refuge** to the Buddha as the teacher, until I attain the essence of enlightenment, **from today onward**—if I hear the dharma in the morning, from morning onward; if I hear the dharma at noon, from noon onward; and if I hear the dharma in the evening, from evening onward.

> inserted root text: stanza 48
>
> To the dharma he has realized,
> Which clears away the fears of saṃsāra,
> And also to the assembly of bodhisattvas,
> I genuinely go for refuge in the same manner.

[275] With regard to the dharma, one should alternate between study, contemplation and meditation. Moreover, when one (as a teacher) is expounding the dharma, even though the words may not be eloquent, if one teaches while focusing at the same time on the meaning, this is also said to be meditation.

[276] sangs-rgyas **de yis** slob-lam du bskal-pa grangs-med mang-por bsod-nams dang ye-shes kyi tshogs-gnyis bsags nas mthar byang-chub-gyi-shing-gi-dbang-po'i drung-du rnam-pa-thams-cad-mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes brnyes-pa'i tshe /

> zab zhi spros-bral 'od-gsal 'dus-ma-byas //
> bdud-rtsi lta-bu'i chos zhig bdag gis brnyes //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[277] zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i chos thams-cad **thugs-su-chud**-pa'am mkhyen-**pa'i chos** gang-zhig nyams-su-blangs-pa las **'khor-ba'i-'jigs-pa** ma-lus-pa **sel-ba**'am zhi-bar-byed-pa'i lung-dang-rtogs-pa'i-chos la lam-gyi-tshul-du de-ring-nyid-nas skyabs-su-mchi-ba **dang** / **byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-tshogs** 'phags-pa phyir-mi-ldog-pa'i dge-'dun **la yang de-bzhin-du** de-ring-nyid-nas grogs-kyi-tshul-du **yang-dag**-par te g.yo-sgyu dang the-tshom-med-par **skyabs-su-mchi'o** //

> inserted root text: stanza 49
>
> bdag ni 'jigs-pas rnam-skrag nas /
> kun-tu-bzang la bdag-nyid 'bul /
> 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs la'ang bdag-nyid kyis /
> bdag gi lus 'di dbul-bar-bgyi /

[278] **bdag ni** 'chi-kha'i-'jigs-pa dang / shi nas bar-do'i-'jigs-pa dang / phyi-ma 'khor-ba dang ngan-song-gi-**'jigs-pas rnam**-par-**skrag nas** rgyal-ba kun gyi sras-kyi-thu-bo 'phags-mchog **kun-tu-bzang**-po zhes 'o-dod-bos te khyed **la bdag** rang-**nyid** kyi lus longs-spyod thams-cad **'bul**-ba yin no zhes 'bod dgos kyi gzhan-du 'jigs-skrag-med-par 'o-dod-kyis-bos na rgyal-ba sras-bcas la rdzun-du-smras-pa dang / de-dag gi thugs kyang khrel-bar-'gyur ro gsungs / de-bzhin-du rgyal-kun-yab-gcig mgon-po **'jam-pa'i-dbyangs la'ang** gzhan gyis ma bskul-bar **bdag** rang-**nyid kyis bdag gi lus 'di dbul-bar-bgyi'o** //

> inserted root text: stanza 50
>
> thugs-rje'i-spyod-pa ma-'khrul- ba /
> spyan-ras-gzigs-mgon de la yang /
> nyam-thag nga-ros 'o-dod-'bod /
> sdig-ldan bdag la bskyab-tu-gsol /

[276] Buddha, while still on the path of learning, gathered the accumulations of merit and wisdom for many countless eons and finally, after he attained the wisdom of omniscience beneath the Bodhi Tree, he spoke (in the *Lalita-vistara-sūtra*):

> I have found a nectar-like dharma
> Which is profound, peaceful, free from complexity, luminous and uncompounded.

[277] From today onward, as my path, I go for refuge to the dharma of statements and realization **which**, when practiced, **clears away** or pacifies all **the fears of saṃsāra**, whatever **dharma he** (the Buddha) **has realized** or understood from among all the profound and vast dharmas. **And also** from today onward, **in the same manner I genuinely,** that is to say with no deceit or doubt, **go for refuge to** the noble saṃgha of non-returners, **the assembly of bodhisattvas,** as my companions.

> inserted root text: 49
>
> Utterly panicking with fear, I
> Offer myself to Samantabhadra;
> To Mañjughoṣa as well
> I myself offer this body of mine.

[278] **Utterly panicking with fear**, the fear of the moment of death, the fear of the intermediate state after death, and the fear of falling into saṃsāra and the lower realms in the next life, one calls out, "**Samantabhadra**, noble and supreme one, senior son of all the victors," and should cry, "**I offer myself**, my own body and all my riches, **to** you." On the other hand, however, it is said that if one cries out in lamentation without being in fear, this would be like lying to the victors and their sons, and their minds would be disappointed. Likewise, **to** the protector **Mañjughoṣa as well**, sole father of all the victors, **I myself**, without being requested by others, **offer this body of mine**.

> inserted root text: stanza 50
>
> Also to the protector Avalokita,
> Whose compassionate conduct is without delusion,
> I let out a lamentation of mournful crying,
> "Please grant me, the wicked one, protection!"

[279] 'phags-pa thugs-rje-chen-po ni sangs-rgyas rin-chen-snying-po'i mdun-du thugs-bskyed-pa nas bzung ste mtha'-yas-pa'i sems-can la **thugs-rjes** te thugs snying-rje-chen-po dang ldan-pas rang-'dod-kyi-'khri-ba spu-rtse-tsam-yang-med-par gzhan-don kho-na byed-pas nang-gi-yon-tan snying-rje dang phyi'i-**spyod-pa ma-'khrul-ba** ste mi-'gal-bar mdzad-pas

[280] dus-dang-rnam-pa-thams-cad-du sems-can thams-cad la spyan-mi-zum-par-gzigs-pas na don dang mthun-pa'i mtshan yang mig-mi-'dzum-pa'am **spyan-ras-gzigs mgon-po de la yang** yid-ches phyir-mi-ldog-pa'i-dad-pas gdung-shugs kyis nyams-mi-thag kyang nyams-thag-thag-gis g.yo-sgyu ma yin-par kha-tsam-min-par snying-khung-rus-pa'i-gting-nas spyir 'khor-ba dang ngan-song-gi-'jigs -pa dang / dgos thag-nye-bar 'chi-ba dang bar-do'i-'jigs-pa la skrag nas sdug-bsngal gyis gzir zhing shin-tu **nyams-thag**-pa'i dbang gis skad byung-ba'i gdangs-mthon-pa'i **ngo-ros 'o-dod** drag-pos **'bod**-pa ste pho-chen-po btab ste 'phags-pa thugs-rje-chen-po zhes bos te /

[281] **sdig-ldan bdag la** zhes spyir lus dang ngag dang khyad-par-du yid kyi dang de-bas-kyang / ji-skad-du /

> rnam-rtog ma-rig-pa gdon-chen te /
> 'khor-ba'i rgya-mtshor ltung-byed yin //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[282] las-ngan thams-cad rnam-rtog las byung / rnam-rtog thams-cad nga dang nga-yir bdag dang gzhan du 'dzin-pa'i bdag-'dzin las byung / bdag-'dzin ma-rig-pa yin-pas dus-dang-rnam-pa-thams-cad-du chos-'chad dam nyan nam 'don-bsgom la-sogs-pa thams-cad la sems skad-cig-tsam-yang gtad rgyu med-par chags-sdang la-sogs-pa'i rtog-ngan gyi rjes-su-'brang nas 'khrul-pa rgya-'byams-su-song ste las-ngan bsags nas 'khor-ba mtha'-med du ngan-gsum la-sogs-par 'gro-ba'i sdig-ldan yin-pa la yin-par-khas-blangs nas las-ngan-po bdag **skyab-tu-gsol**-lo /

> inserted root text: stanza 51
>
> 'phags-pa nam-mkha'i-snying-po la /
> sa-yi-snying-po dag dang ni /
> thugs-rje-che-mgon thams-cad la /
> skyabs-tshol snying-nas 'o-dod-'bod /

[279] As the Noble and Great Compassionate One developed bodhicitta in front of Buddha Ratna-garbha, he works exclusively for the benefit of others, without the slightest trace of attachment to self-centered interests, **compassionate**ly for infinite sentient beings, that is to say being endowed with great compassion in his heart. Therefore, his inner quality of compassion and his outer **conduct** are **without delusion**, meaning he does not let them contradict (each other).

[280] Because he gazes without closing his eyes at all times and circumstances, at all sentient beings, even his name accords with his intention: 'the one who never closes his eyes' or **the protector**, **Avalokita**. **Also to** him, with trusting and irreversible faith, in intense longing, not in a deceiving way like those who are not miserable but pretend to be miserable, and not as mere lip-service, but from the depth of my heart, being frightened in general by the horrors of saṃsāra and the lower realms, and in particular by the closeness of death and the horrors of the intermediate state, being tormented by suffering and utterly **mournful**, **I let out** a strong **lamentation**, with a loud **cry** escaping from my voice, meaning letting out a great wail, calling out, "Noble and Great Compassionate One."

[281] When it says, '**me, the wicked one**', this refers generally to (one's negative deeds done with) body and speech, and in particular, to (those done with) mind. Therefore, as it is said:

> The great demon of thoughts and ignorance
> Drowns us in the ocean of saṃsāra.

[282] All evil karma springs from thoughts. All thoughts spring from ego-clinging, holding on to 'me', 'mine', 'I' and 'other'. Ego-clinging is ignorance. Because of this, at all times and in all circumstances, in all (situations) such as when expounding the dharma, listening (to the dharma), reciting (scriptures) or meditating, one cannot even focus one's mind for a second, but instead follows negative thoughts such as aversion and attachment and thus falls into perpetual delusion. Having accumulated bad karma, one is destined to endless saṃsāra in the lower realms. Acknowledging as it is the fact of being such a wicked one, **please grant me protection** from my bad karma.

> inserted root text: stanza 51
>
> In the noble Ākāśagarbha,
> In Kṣitigarbha, and
> In all protectors of great compassion
> I seek refuge, crying out in lamentation from my heart.

[283] de-bzhin-du rang-re sdom-pa thams-cad ni blang zhing bsrung-bya ni ma bsung-ba'i gang-zag yin-pas nam-mkha'i-snying-po la phyag-mchod sogs kyis bsten-pa gal-che ste sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das kyis 'phags-pa nam-mkha'i-snying-po ni byang-sems las-dang-po ltung-ba byung-ba rnams kyi 'khar-ba lta-bu yin-par gsungs-pas na **'phags-pa nam-mkha'i-snying-po dang** / nyon-mongs 'chol-nyog-tu spyod-pa'i btsun-gzugs las-dang-po-pa sogs gang phongs shing rgud-pa rnams la thugs lhag-par-brtse zhing skyob-par-mdzad-pa'i **sa-yi-snying-po dag dang ni** byams-pa dang sgrib-pa-rnam-sel la-sogs-pa phyogs-bcu'i-zhing na **thugs-rje** dang smon-lam sogs rgya-**che**-ba'i **mgon**-po sa-bcu'i-dbang-phyug **thams-cad la skyabs-'tshol** zhing skyobs-shig ces **snying**-thag-pa-**nas** mtshan-nas-brjod de **'o-dod**-kyis-**'bod**-par-bya'o //

> inserted root text: stanza 52
>
> gang-zhig mthong nas gshin-rje yi /
> pho-nya la-sogs sdang-ba rnams /
> skrag nas phyogs-bzhir 'byer-byed-pa /
> rdo-rje-can la skyabs-su-mchi /

[284] gang-zhes spyi-sgra bye-brag la sbyar-ba dpal gsang-ba'i-bdag-po **gang-zhig mthong**-ba-tsam-nyid-**nas gshin-rje-yi-pho-nya** las-mkhan rnams dang bya dang khyi **la-sogs**-pa pha-bsad-kyi-lag-dmar ltar **sdang-ba** yi sems dang ldan zhing gnod-par-byed-pa **rnams** rab-tu-**skrag nas phyogs-bzhir 'byer**-ba'am 'bros-par-**byed-pa** phyag-na-**rdo-rje-can** la dad cing gus-pas **skyabs-su-mchi'o** //

[285] de-yang thun-mong-gi-bshad-pa ltar-na dus-gsum-gyi-sangs-rgyas thams-cad kyis dang-po thugs-bskyed nas mngon-par-byang-chub ste chos-kyi-'khor-lo-bskor nas mya-ngan-las-ma-'das-kyi-bar-du dpal phyag-na-rdo-rjes rdo-rje-'bar-ba'i mtshon-cha bsnams nas rgyal-ba de-dag gi sku-gsung-thugs la nye-ba-'tshe-ba'i ma-rungs-pa thams-cad kyi mgo-'gem-par-mdzad cing mel-tshe-byed-pa ste / dper-na 'jig-rten-pa rnams kyis lhan-skyes-kyi-lha zhes-pa ltar mdzad de rjes-su-'brang-ba'o //

[283] Likewise, since we [rang re] are persons who have taken all vows but have not kept them as we were supposed to, it is important to rely on Ākāśagarbha through prostrations and offerings and the like. The Buddha, the Bhagavān, said that the noble Ākāśagarbha is like a walking stick for novice bodhisattvas who have committed a (transgression leading to a) downfall. Therefore, saying "Protect me!" **I seek refuge** in **the noble Ākāśagarbha**; **and** (in) **Kṣitigarbha**, the one who especially cares for and protects those who are destitute and troubled, like those beginners, mere imitations of monks, who act out all kinds of afflictions; **and in all** sovereigns of the tenth (bodhisattva) level, **the protectors** who are **great** in their **compassion** and aspirations, such as Maitreya and Nivārṇaviṣkambhīn, (who dwell) in the buddha fields of the ten directions. I call them by their names, **crying out in lamentation from** the bottom of **my heart**.

> inserted root text: stanza 52
>
> I go for refuge to Vajrī,[40]
> The sight of whom frightens (all) hateful ones,
> Such as the messengers of the Lord of Death,
> And causes them to flee in terror to the four quarters.

[284] If one assigns a particular (meaning) to the general term 'whom', then (it refers) to the glorious Guhyapati.[41] With faith and devotion **I go for refuge to Vajrapāṇi**, **the** mere **sight of whom** utterly **frightens (all)** those who are harmful and whose minds are **hateful**—as if I were the red-handed killer of their fathers—**such as the messengers** and henchmen **of the Lord of Death**, (wild) birds and dogs, **and causes them** to escape or **to flee in** utter **terror to the four quarters**.

[285] Moreover, according to the general explanations (of the sūtras), from the time when all the buddhas of the three times first developed bodhicitta, attained complete enlightenment, and set the wheel of dharma in motion until the time they entered into nirvāṇa, the glorious Vajrapāṇi, holding a blazing vajra-weapon, guarded them by splitting the heads of all demonic ones who caused mischief to the body, speech and minds of these victors. He followed them, acting like what worldly people call a birth divinity.

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40 Vajrī [rdo rje can] means 'having a vajra' and refers to Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje].

41 Guhyapati, the 'lord of secrets' [gsang ba'i bdag po] is an epithet of Vajrapāṇi.

[286] yang gsang-ba-pa zhes-pa gnod-sbyin yin la de'i bdag-po gnod-sbyin-lag-na-rdo-rje zhes-bya-ba'ang yin no // thun-min gsang-sngags ltar-na rgyal-ba thams-cad kyi thugs-rdo-rje'i-rang-gzugs sku-gsung-thugs-kyi-gsang-ba bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-pa'i bdag-por-dbang-bskur zhing dbang-rtags-kyi-rdo-rje phyag na bsnams-pas na de-skad-do //

[287] rang-re'i da-lta rgyal-sras rigs-gsum-mgon-po sogs rang gang-mos kyi yi-dam-gyi-lha gcig chog-ma-zhig med-thabs-gtan-nas-med-pas de'i dbang-zhus lha-bsgom sngags-bzlas te dus-nam-du mi-brjed-par 'jigs-skrag nam byung dang mtshan rmi-lam gyi dus-su dran thub-pa zhig dgos // de-ltar byung na sang 'chi tshe mdun-du-bsu-mar-byon-'ong-ba'i snang-ba 'byung ngo gsungs //

> inserted root text: stanza 53
>
> sngon-chad khyed kyi bka'-las-'das /
> da ni 'jigs-pa-che mthong nas /
> khyed la skyabs-su-mchi lags kyis /
> 'jigs-pa myur-du bsal-du-gsol /

[288] las-ngan bdag **ni sngon-chad** rgyal-ba sras-bcas **khyed** rnams **kyi bka'** dge-sdig-blang-dor las **'das**-par-byas kyang **da ni** 'chi-kha dang bar-do phyi-ma ngan-song-gi-'jigs-pa cher te chen-po **mthong nas** 'gyel-ba'i sar-'ju zhing brten nas ldang-ba ltar mgon-po thugs-rje-chen-po dang ldan-pa **khyed** rnams **la skyabs-su-mchi-ba lags kyis** sdig-pa mi-dge-ba'i 'bras-bu sdug-bsngal gyis **'jigs-pa** de-dag **myur-du bsal du gsol**-ba-'debs-pa'o //

[289] gsum-pa gnyen-po-kun-tu-spyod-pa'i-stobs ni / de la bag-yod dang shes-bzhin dang bzod-le rnams gtso-bo de-dang-de skyed-byed yin-pa ltar 'dir yang sdig-pa dag-byed kyi gnyen-po rang-rgyud la skyed-byed yin-pa'i phyir / las-rgyu-'bras dang tshe-mi-rtag-pa yang-yang bsgom ste rang-rgyud la sdig-pa 'dags-pa'i gnyen-po bskyed-pa'i blo med-pa rnams la de'i blo bskyed-pa dang / cung-zad yod kyang le-lo rnam-g.yeng gis der mi sbyor-ba rnams la myur-du de la sbyor-ba'i phyir las-rgyu-'bras dang tshe-mi-rtag-pa yang-nas-yang-du bsgom ste

[286] Furthermore, being a Yakṣa, he is called Guhyaka; being their lord, he is also called Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi. According to the extraordinary Secret Mantra (vehicle), he is empowered as the personification of the vajra-like mind of all the victors, as the lord of the inconceivable secrecy of their body, speech and mind. And because he holds in his hand a vajra as the sign of that empowerment, he is thus called (Vajrapāṇi, the one who holds a vajra in his hand).

[287] Since one single, sufficient meditation deity to whom we at present feel personally attracted—(any) son of the victors, such as (one of) the Lords of the Three Families—is utterly indispensable (for the practice of Mahāyāna), we must receive the respective empowerment, meditate on that deity, and recite the (respective) mantra, without ever forgetting (this meditation deity), so that we are able to remember it at night in a dream or when fear arises. It is said that if we have (such capacity), then if we die tomorrow, (the deity) will appear in a vision, coming to lead us.

> inserted root text: stanza 53
>
> Previously, I ignored your teaching.
> Now, catching sight of great terror,
> I go for refuge to you.
> Please swiftly clear away (these) fears.

[288] **Previously, I**, the one with bad karma, **ignored** the **teaching** of the victors and their sons, (ignored) virtue and negativity, what to do and what to avoid. But **now**, **catching sight of** the **great**, meaning enormous, **terror** of the moment of death, of the intermediate state, and of the lower realms in the next life, just like someone who grips the ground he has fallen upon, supports himself and rises up again, **I go for refuge to you**, protectors endowed with great compassion. I supplicate, "**Please swiftly clear away** these **fears** of suffering, the fruition of my negative deeds and non-virtuous actions."

The power of the applied antidote

[289] Third, the power of the applied antidote: Though this (power) mainly (concerns what is taught in) the chapters on heedfulness, introspection and patience and the development of these (topics), here (in stanzas 54-65) (the power of the applied antidote) concerns developing an antidote in one's mind that purifies one's negative deeds. For this one must repeatedly contemplate on karma, the law of cause and effect, and on impermanence. That is to say all who lack the mindset of developing an antidote to purify the negative deeds in their minds, need to develop such a mind-set. And those who might even have (this mind-set to purify their negative deeds) to some extent, (but) who do not apply (the antidote) due to laziness and distraction, must swiftly apply it. For this purpose they should contemplate again and again on karma, the law of cause and effect, and on impermanence.

[290] de'i blo skyes shing de sbyor-ba'i tshe dge-ba gang sgrub sbyor-ba sdig-pa bshags-pa'i ched-du bsam-pa dang / dngos-gzhi'i dus-su sdig-pa bshags-pa'i dran-'dun dang / rjes-su sdig-pa 'dags-pa'i ched-du bsngo-ba ste sbyor-dngos-rjes-gsum tshang na thams-cad sdig-bshags yin-pas gnyen-po yin la //

[291] de-yang tshe-gang dben-par dge-ba-sgrub-par-byas kyang nyes-pa phran-bu-tsam byung-ba la'ang gnyen-pos ma bshags na de'i rnam-smin myong dgos te / dper-na nas mang-po'i nang-du sran-rdog gicg yod-pa sar-btab na nas mang-po skye yang srang-rdog de skye-ba la'ang mi gnod-par skye-ba ltar dge-ba-cher-byas kyang sdig-pa'i gnyen-por-ma-dmigs-na des sdig-pa 'joms-par mi byed gsungs //

[292] dge-ba-can yang phyi-ma ngan-song du mi skye-ba'i nges-pa-med de der skye-ba'i las rgyud la yod srid-pa'i phyir dang / khyad-par 'chi-kha'i-mtshams-sbyor la rag-las-pas na gang la mtshams-sbyor mi shes-pas sdig-pa bshags-pa'i gnyen-po la 'bad-pa 'di gal-che-bas 'di-ltar rgyu nyon-mongs la bsam ste gnyen-po la 'bad-pas bshags dgos-pa'i rgyu-mtshan nad kyi dpes-bstan-pa

> inserted root text: stanza 54
>
> tha-mal nad kyis 'jigs na-yang /
> sman-pa'i-ngag-bzhin bya dgos na /
> 'dod-chags la-sogs nyes brgya yi /
> nad kyis rtag btab smos-ci-dgos /

[293] rlung mkhris bad-kan 'dus-pa la-sogs-pa'i **tha-mal** gyi **nad-kyis**-thebs-pa la **'jigs na-yang sman-pa'i-ngag-bzhin**-du sman-bsten zhing gtar-bsreg-phug-pa sogs bzod-par-**bya dgos na** thog-ma-med-pa-nas **'dod-chags** zhe-sdang gti-mug nga-rgyal **la-sogs**-pa'i **nyes**-pa **brgya**-phrag-mang-po **yi nad kyis dus-rtag**-tu **btab**-pa'i rang-re rnams kyis sman-pa-mchog rgyal-ba'i-bka' ltar blang-dor ji-lta-ba bzhin byed dgos-pa **smos-ci-dgos** so //

[290] Once they have developed this mind-set and have applied it, whatever virtue they may practice functions as the preparatory part, the motivation (to practice) in order to confess one's negative deeds. At the time of the main part, (this mind-set) is earnestly remembering to confess one's wicked deeds, and at the concluding part (this mind-set) is dedicating (one's merit) in order to purify one's negative deeds. Thus, if the preparatory part, the main part and the concluding part are complete, everything serves as a confession of one's negative deeds and, therefore, as an antidote.

[291] Furthermore, although one might have practiced virtue for an entire lifetime in solitude, unless one confesses with (such) an antidote when even a tiny misdeed occurs, one will have to experience its ripening. For instance, if there is a single pea among many barley (grains), and one plants (the pea together with the barley grains) in the soil, though much barley will grow, this pea will also grow, and it will grow without being harmed (by the great amount of barley). In the same way, it is said that even though one has for the most part practiced virtue, without focusing on the antidote for one's negative deeds, the virtue (alone) will not annihilate one's negative deeds.

[292] There is no certainty that even a virtuous person can avoid taking rebirth in his next life in the lower realms as he might retain in his mind-stream the karma of taking rebirth there. In particular, since (one's next rebirth) depends on (one's mind-set) on the verge of death, if one does not know where to guide oneself, it is consequently of utmost importance to put effort into the antidote by confessing one's negative deeds. Thus, thinking about the causes (of suffering), the afflictions, one should endeavor in the antidote. Therefore, the reason that confession is necessary is demonstrated through the example of disease:

> inserted root text: stanza 54
>
> If I must comply with a physician's advice
> When frightened by a common disease,
> Then no need to mention (that I must heed the Buddha) when perpetually infected
> With diseases of hundreds of misdeeds such as desire and so forth.

[293] **If I must comply with a physician's advice**, rely on medicine, and endure things such as bloodletting, burning, acupuncture and so forth, **when frightened** because of infection **by a common disease**, such as wind, bile, phlegm and their combinations, **then** there is **no need to mention** that we[42] should follow exactly what should be done and what should be avoided according to the advice of the Victor, the supreme physician, **when** since beginningless time (we have been) **perpetually infected with hundreds of** multifarious **diseases of misdeeds such as desire**, aversion, ignorance, arrogance **and so forth**.

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[42] Kunpal moves from the implied first person singular of the root text to first person plural.

> inserted root text: stanza 55
>
> de gcig gis kyang 'dzam-gling na /
> gnas-pa'i mi kun brlag-byed na /
> de-dag gso-ba'i-sman gzhan ni /
> phyogs rnams kun-nas mi rnyed na

[294] chags sogs nyon-mongs-pa'i nad **de**-dag gi nang nas **gcig gis kyang** ngam yang na nyon-mongs-pa de-dag rgyud la skyes-pa'i gang-zag gcig gis kyang **'dzam**-bu'i-**gling** na **gnas-pa'i mi** la-sogs-pa **kun** ngan-song la-sogs-par sdug-bsngal gyis **brlag**-par-**byed na** nyon-mongs-pa'i nad **de-dag gso**-bar-byed-**pa'i-sman** dam-pa'i-chos las **gzhan ni phyogs rnams kun nas** btsal yang sus-kyang **mi rnyed na**

> inserted root text: stanza 56
>
> de la sman-pa thams-cad mkhyen /
> zug-ngu thams-cad 'byin-pa yi /
> bka' ltar mi byed sems-pa ni /
> shin-tu gti-mug smad-pa'i-gnas

[295] **de la** ste nad de-dag gso-ba'i **sman-pa**-mchog **thams-cad-mkhyen**-pa sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das lus-sems-gnyis-ka'i-sdug-bsnagl gyi **zug-rngu thams-cad** rtsa-ba-drung-nas **'byin**-par-mdzad-**pa yi bka'**-lung nas ji-skad gsungs-pa **ltar** dam-pa'i-chos kyi sman-bsten-par **mi byed**-par phyin-ci-log-tu **sems-pa** rnams **ni** rang-ngos-nas **shin-tu** blun zhing **gti-mug**-can gzhan rgyal-ba sras-bcas kyis **smad-pa'i-gnas** dang / bsrung-skyob-kyi-lhas kyang 'dor zhing smad-par-byed de /

[296] klu'i-dbang-pos /

> gang-zhig gser-snod rin-chen spras-pa yis //
> ngan-skyugs 'phyag-par-bgyis-pa de bas ni //
> gang-zhig mi ru skyes las sdig-pa dang //
> bgyis-pa de ni ches rab blun-pa lags //

zhes so // lhas-sbyin la mi-gleng-pa mchil-ma-'thung-ba zhes gsungs-pa lta-bu'o //

inserted root text: stanza 55

If all people living in Jambudvīpa
Can be destroyed by just one of these (diseases of afflictions),
And if no other medicine to cure these
Can be found in any quarter,

[294] **If all people** and other (beings) **living in Jambudvīpa can be destroyed** by the suffering in the lower realms, having been infected **by just one** among **these** diseases of afflictions such as attachment and so forth, and **if no other medicine to cure these** diseases of afflictions besides the sublime dharma **can be found** by anybody, even if searched for **in any quarter**,

inserted root text: stanza 56

Then concerning this, those who have the intention to disregard
The advice of the omniscient physician
That can uproot all misery
Are extremely ignorant and deserve to be criticized.

[295] **then concerning this**, those who have the perverted **intention**—not to take the medicine of the sublime dharma (and) **to disregard the advice that can uproot all misery**, both mental and physical suffering, just as it was given by the supreme **physician**, the **omniscient** Buddha, the Bhagavān, who can cure these diseases—are in themselves **extremely** foolish and **ignorant** people who **deserve to be criticized** by others, by the victors and their sons. Even the protective deities will forsake them and leave them behind.

[296] As Nāgendra[43] said (in his *Suhṛl-lekha*):

> Even more foolish than one who cleans up
> Excrement with a jewel-ornamented golden vessel
> Is he who, having been born human,
> Commits wicked deeds.

Similarly, (Buddha) called Devadatta a spittle-drinking fool.

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[43] Nāgendra [klu'i dbang po] is an epithet for Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub].

[297] 'dir rgyal-po rnams kyis 'tsho-byed-gzhon-nu'i gso'i-sman-pa'i-rgyal-por lan-gsum dbang-bskur-ba dang rang-nyid kyis kyang 'jig-rten na sems-nad gso-ba'i sman-pa sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das dang / lus-nad gso-ba'i sman-pa bdag-nyid do zhes nga-rgyal-ba'i tshe de-bzhin-gshegs-pas de la nga-rgyal de med na chos-bstan-pas bden-pa-mthong-bar dgongs te /ri-bo-gangs-ldan du rdzu-'phrul gyis khrid de sman-btu-bcug-pas phal-cher ma shes-pas de-bzhin-gshegs-pas ji-bzhin mkhyen cing bstan-pas nga-rgyal bcag-par-mdzad-pa dang sbyar te sman-pa'ang rig-gnas phran-bu-tsam shes-pas mi 'ong-bas sman-pa thams-cad mkhyen-pa sangs-rgyas kho-na dang / sman yang dam-pa'i-chos ma-gtogs-pa gzhan-med-par gsungs /

> inserted root text: stanza 57
>
> g.yang-sa tha-mal chung-ngu la'ang /
> bag-yod gnas-par-bya dgos na /
> dpag-tshad stong du ltung-ba yi /
> yun-ring g.yangs-sar smos-ci-dgos /

[298] 'bras-bu ngan-song gi g.yang-sa la bsams te bshags dgos-pa'i rgyu-mtshan ni / ltung yang yan-lag tsam snad-par-'gyur-ba'i skas-mgo sogs **g.yang-sa tha-mal**-pa **chung-ngu la'ang** 'gro 'ong la-sogs-pa la **bag-yod**-pas **gnas-par-bya dgos na** 'di nas **dpag-tshad stong du** zhes stong-phrag-nyi-shur te nyi-khri la-sogs-par 'og-tu **ltung-ba yi** dmyal-ba yang-sos la-sogs-par bar-gyi-bskal-pa sogs **yun-ring**-por sdug-bsngal drag-po myong-bar-'gyur-bas **g.yang-sar**-ltung dogs kyis bag-yod-par-byed-pa **smos-ci-dgos** so //

> inserted root text: stanza 58
>
> de-ring kho-na mi 'chi zhes /
> bde-bar 'dug-pa rigs-ma-yin /
> bdag ni med-par-'gyur-ba'i dus /
> de ni gdon-mi-zar-bar 'gyur /

[299] des-na myur-du gnyen-po dge-ba la 'bad-par gdams-pa / dus-**de-ring kho-na** tsam la'ang **mi 'chi**'o **zhes** sems bag-phab ste **bde-bar-'dug-pa** 'di ni **rigs** shing 'thad-pa **ma yin** te **bdag ni** shi nas **med-par-'gyur-ba'i dus**-gang-yin-pa **de ni gdon-mi-za-bar** te the-tshom-med-par-**'gyur** nges shing de-yang do-nub tsam-du'ang mi 'gyur-ba'i nges-pa-med de /

[297] After the kings had empowered Jīvaka-kumāra three times as the king of (all) physicians, he became proud, thinking, "In this world, the Buddha, the Bhagavān, is the physician who heals mental diseases, and I am the physician who heals physical diseases." The Buddha thought, "If he were without pride, I could teach him the dharma through which he could see the truth." With his miraculous power (Buddha) led (Jīvaka-kumāra) to the Himavat mountains. When he made him collect medicinal plants, (Jīvaka-kumāra) did not know most of them. Because the Tathāgata knew exactly what they were and taught him, (Jīvaka-kumāra's) pride was broken. (Buddha) spoke, "It is not enough to know a little about medicine or the minor sciences. Only the Buddha is the omniscient physician, and there is no medicine other than the sublime dharma."

> inserted root text: stanza 57
>
> If I must remain heedful
> (When approaching) even a small, ordinary drop,
> Then how much more so (when in fear of falling) into a chasm
> That drops thousands of leagues, (where I have to remain) for a long time.

[298] Considering the result (of negative deeds), the abyss of the lower realms, (here is) the reason for the necessity of confession: "**If I must remain heedful** when approaching **even a small, ordinary drop**, such as the top of a staircase, where by falling I might simply injure my limbs, **then how much more so** must I be heedful in fear of falling **into a chasm that drops thousands of leagues**, meaning twenty thousand (leagues) below this (world of Jambudvīpa), because I will experience **for a long time,** like for an intermediate aeon, intense suffering in the hell realms such as the reviving hell and others."

> inserted root text: stanza 58
>
> It is unreasonable to rest easy
> Thinking, "Today, at least, I shall not die,"
> For inevitably the time will come
> When I shall become nothing.

[299] Therefore, (here is) the instruction to swiftly endeavor in virtue, the antidote (to one's negative deeds). **It is unreasonable** and unsubstantiated to relax my mind [sems bag phab] and **rest easy** [bde bar 'dug pa], thinking, "**Today, at least, I shall not die,**" **for** it is certain and beyond doubt that **inevitably the time will come when I shall** die and **become nothing**. There is no certainty that it will not happen even tonight.

[300] bshes-spring du'ang /

tshe ni gnod mang rlung gis btab-pa yi //
chu yi chu-bor bas kyang mi-rtag na //
dbugs-dbyung dbugs-rngub gnyid-kyis-log-pa las //
sad khoms gang lags de ni ngo-mtshar-che //

zhes-pas so //

> inserted root text: stanza 59
>
> bdag la mi 'jigs su-yis byin /
> 'di las ji-ltar nges-thar-'gyur /
> gdon-mi-za-bar med-'gyur na /
> ci'i-phyir bdag yid-bde-bar 'dug /

[301] des-na **bdag la** de-ring tsam-du'ang mi 'chi-bas 'chi-ba la **mi 'jigs**-pa'ang skrag mi dgos-par sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das sogs **su yis byin** te sus-kyang byin-pa med na 'chi-ba'i-'jigs-pa **'di las ji-ltar nges**-par **thar**-bar-**'gyur** te mi 'gyur te / mtshan-mo-bzang-po'i-mdo las /

sang tsam 'chi'am sus shes kyi //
de-ring-nyid-du bstun te bya//
'chi-bdag sde-chen de dang ni //
khyod-nyid bshes-ba ma yin nam //

zhes-pas so //

[302] **gdon-mi-za-bar** shi nas **med**-par-**'gyur** nges **na ci-ltar bdag**-nyid **yid**-phab ste sos-dal-kyis za-dga'-'thung-skyid rtsed-mo rnam-g.yeng sogs kyi ngang-du **bde-bar-'dug** ste 'dug mi rigs te / mya-ngan-bsal-bar yang /

sa 'og gam ni mtho-ris na //
skyes nas la-la ma shi-ba //
'ga'-zhig khyod kyis mthong-ba'am //
thos sam 'on-te the-tshom-za //

zhes-pa ltar ro //

[303] de-yang blo-ngan-goms-kyi-bag-chags shog-dril lta-bu'i 'dod-yon gyi zhen-chags 'di spang-bar-bya-ba'i phyir 'di bsam dgos te /

[300] Also in (Nāgārjuna's) *Suhṛl-lekha*:

> Since life with its many ills is even more impermanent
> Than a wind-blown water bubble,
> That we still have the chance to inhale after exhaling or
> To wake up again after having fallen asleep is most amazing.

> inserted root text: 59
>
> Who can assure me (that I need) not fear?
> How can I be surely freed from this (fear of dying)?
> If I will inevitably become nothing,
> How can my mind rest at ease?

[301] Therefore, **who**, the Buddha Bhagavān or anyone else, **can assure me** that I need **not fear** or panic because at least today I will not die? But if nobody can give me (this assurance), **how can I be surely freed from this** fear of dying? I cannot. From the *Bhadra-karātrī-sūtra*:[44]

> Who can know he will not die tomorrow?
> Today is the time to practice;
> The great legions of the Lord of Death
> Are not your friends, are they?

[302] **If** it is certain that **I will inevitably** die and **become nothing**, **how can my mind rest** relaxed and with leisure, **at ease** in a state of delightful eating, joyful drinking and playful distraction? It would not be proper to do so. As it is said in the *Śoka-vinodana*:

> Have you seen, heard of
> Or suspected that a few (beings),
> Born below the earth
> Or in the higher realms, will not have to die?

[303] In order to overcome attachment to sense pleasures, to habitual tendencies of familiarity with a negative mind-set, which are like rolled-up paper,[45] one should consider in this way:

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[44] According to *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, page 41) *Udāna-varga*.

[45] This refers to a common example that just as paper which has been rolled for a long time naturally rolls itself back up after being stretched out, attachment to sense pleasures is not easily overcome.

inserted root text: stanza 60

sngon chad myong ste zhig pa las /
bdag la lhag pa ci yod na /
bdag ni de la mngon zhen nas /
bla ma'i bka' dang 'gal bar byas /

[304] **sngon-chad myong ste** zhes da-snga yan-chad 'dod-pa'i-yul-lnga-po 'di ma spyad-pa med-par longs-spyad kyang yul-shes-'phrad-pa'i-bde-ba skad-cig-ma-tsam-zhig myong nas **zhig** ste ci-yang-med-**pa las** skad-cig-gnyis-par gnas-pa'i-bde-ba ni mi srid cing med-pas snying-po-med-pa

[305] de-bzhin-du da-dung-yang spyad na yang zhig cing med-pa las **bdag la lhag-pa** sngar dang mi-'dra-ba'i bde-ba skad-cig-gnyis-par mi zhig-pa **ci-zhig-yod**-de de med **na** med-bzhin-du **bdag ni** 'dod-pa'i-yul-lnga-po **de la mngon-par-zhen** cing chags **nas** de'i-don-du sdig-sdug sogs gang la'ang mi-'dzem-par dka'-tshegs ngal-dub chen-po khyad-du-bsad nas **bla-ma'i** ste rang gi rtsa-ba'i-bla-ma dang 'jig-rten-gsum-gyi-bla-ma sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das sras-dang-bcas-pa'i **bka'-dang-'gal-bar-byas** te 'di-phyi-gnyis phung-byed-par yin-pas de-ltar ma byed cig //

[306] khyad-par-du sred-pa che-ba sha chang bud-med dang don-med-pa kha sna'i dud-pa la lhag-par zhen nas yang spyad yang zhig-pa las sred-pa lhag-par 'phel te 'di-phyi-gnyis phung-du-'gyur-ba las ci-yang-med-pas na 'dod-pa'i-yul thams-cad la zhen-pa bcad de bya-ba thams-cad che-bzhag-chung-bskyur-byed-pa gal-che-ba yin gsungs // de-ltar rang gis longs-spyod-pa thams-cad la snying-po-med-par mthong nas zhen-chags bcad dgos te / de-yang byis-pas rtsed-mo la zin nas 'jog-pa-med-par ltar 'dod-yon thams-cad spyad zin nas 'jog-pa-med-pas bya-ba thams-cad rbad-chod-byed dgos la /

[307] de-yang srid-pa'i pha-ma sred-len-gnyis yin-pas na gang-la sred-pa che na sdig-pa yang de'i che zhing sred-len-gnyis rgyun-chad na las yod kyang myong mi dgos so // tshigs bzhi 'di man-ngag-snying-po yin gsungs/

> inserted root text: stanza 60
>
> Is there anything that remains with me
> From what I experienced before, which has (not already) vanished?
> Nevertheless, I am clearly attached to these (pleasures),
> And have disregarded my guru's advice.

[304] **What I experienced before** refers to the five sense pleasures that I have enjoyed until now, not having missed the enjoyment of any. When a single moment of bliss, where object and consciousness meet, is experienced, that (bliss) **has vanished** (already) and nothing remains **from** it. A bliss that abides for a second moment is impossible and does not exist. Therefore, (the clinging to bliss) is pointless.

[305] Although I continue to enjoy (the sense pleasures) in this way, (the bliss) vanishes and becomes nothing. **Is there anything that remains with me**, a bliss that does not vanish in the second moment, which differs from the previous (moment of bliss)? There is none. **Nevertheless**, while there is nothing, **I am clearly attached** and cling **to these** five objects of sense pleasure. For their sake, I discount great hardship and trouble, not shying away from any kind of negative deeds, suffering and so forth. And I **have disregarded my guru's advice,** that is (the advice of) my personal root guru and of Buddha Bhagavān, the guru of the three worlds, together with his sons. Thus, I have destroyed both this life and the next. Therefore, do not behave this way.

[306] Particularly, being overly attached to great craving, for meat, alcohol and women and the useless smoking and sniffing of tobacco, one enjoys them repeatedly while (the pleasures) repeatedly vanish. Nevertheless, one's craving increases even more. As nothing remains but the destruction of this life and the next, one should cut attachment to all objects of sense pleasure. Giving up all activities (of indulgence in sense pleasures), the big ones as well as the small ones, is said to be important. Thus, seeing the pointlessness of all one's enjoyments, one must sever one's attachments. Just as children are absorbed in their play and cannot leave it, (people) fixate on the enjoyment of sense pleasures and cannot leave them. Therefore, one must completely cut through all these activities (of attachment).

[307] Furthermore, since craving and clinging are the parents of existence, if one has great craving for whatever it may be, one's negative deeds are equally great. When the continuity of craving and clinging is cut, even though one's (residual) karma still exists, one need not experience its (fruition). These four lines (of stanza 60) are said to be an 'essential instruction'.

inserted root text: stanza 61

gson-tshe 'di dang de-bzhin-du /
gnyen dang bshes-pa rnams spangs nas /
gcig-pu ga-shed 'gro dgos na /
mdza' dang mi-mdza' kun ci-rung /

[308] da-lta bla-ma dang dpon-po gzhan-du 'gro tshe 'khor-g.yog brgya-nyi-shu sogs dpon-g.yog mang-por 'gro-ba lta-bu med-par ma-zad 'chi-ba'i-tshe na rang-rang gi **gson**-pa'i-**tshe** srog **'di dang de-bzhin-du** pha-ma bu-tsha sogs **gnyen dang** grogs dga'-mdza' **bshes** dang nor longs-spyod sogs gang-yod-**pa rnams spangs**-pa'am shul-du-bzhag-**nas** rgyal-po chen-po dang sprang-po-dbyug-bzung gnyis 'dra-bar

[309] rang-nyid grogs-med **gcig-pur** gcer-bu lag-stong-mchan-du-bcug nas 'jigs-pa'i-mun-nag gis bdun-nas-bsus / las-kyi-rlung-dmar gyis rgyab-nas-ded de gshin-rje'i-skyes-bu 'jigs-su-rung-bas sod-sod dang chod-chod kyi sgra dang bcas-par **ga-shed** de las-dbang gis mtho srid-pa'i-rtse-mo nas mnar-med kyi bar gar-'gro-cha-med du rang-dbang-med-par **'gro dgos**-pa'i dus-**na** gnyen-nye-ba grogs dga'-**mdza'** dang 'jig-rten-pa'i-mi'i-dgra **mi-mdza'**-ba **kun ci-rung** ste phan-pa dang gnod-pa cung-zad kyang mi byed la

inserted root text: stanza 62

mi dge ba las sdug bsngal 'byung /
de las ji ltar nges thar zhes /
nyin mtshan rtag tu bdag gis ni /
'di nyid 'ba' zhig bsam pa'i rigs /

[310] de-tshe cis gnod na de-dag gi don-du chags-sdang sogs kyis rgyu sdig-pa **mi-dge-ba-bcu** sogs byas-pa **las** 'bras-bu dmyal-ba la-sogs-pa'i **sdug-bsngal** dbang-med-du **'byung** zhing shin-tu mnar-bar-'gyur-bas na

> inserted root text: stanza 61
>
> As I must abandon this life and in the same way
> My relatives and friends
> When I must go alone to an uncertain destination,
> What use are all my friends and enemies?

[308] Not only can I not travel like gurus and officials nowadays—who, when traveling somewhere, go with a multitude of servants and assistants, such as an entourage of a hundred and twenty servants and so forth—but, moreover, at the time of (my) death, **I must abandon** and leave behind **this** personal **life and in the same way my relatives** such as my parents, sons and grandsons, helpers, beloved ones, acquaintances **and friends**, as well as all that I possess in the way of riches and enjoyments. A great king and a beggar holding a walking stick are both alike.

[309] At that time, **when I** myself **must go**—without friends, **alone**, naked, my empty hands tucked under my armpits, pulled from the front by a black darkness, driven from behind by the red karmic winds, while the fearsome henchmen of the Lord of Death (scream) with loud voices, "Kill, kill!" and "Cut, cut!"—**to an uncertain destination**,[46] due to the power of my karma, (to any place) from the peak of worldly existence above, down to the Avīcī(-hell), without any personal choice, without certainty where I will go, then **what use are all** my intimate relatives, helpers, beloved ones, **friends and enemies**, my worldly foes**?** They can neither harm nor benefit me in the slightest.

> inserted root text: stanza 62
>
> Since from non-virtuous actions suffering will arise,
> How can I surely free (my mind) from these?
> Thinking constantly, day and night,
> About this alone, is (most) appropriate.

[310] What will harm me at this time (of death)? **Since from** the negative deeds, the ten **non-virtuous actions** that I have committed for the sake of these (friends and foes), caused through attachment, aversion and the like, the **suffering** of the hell-realms and so forth, the fruitions (of these non-virtuous actions), **will** inevitably **arise,** I will be intensely tormented.

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[46] ga shed: uncertain destination [yul nges med]; somewhere, to an uncertain location [nges pa med pa'i phyogs ga shed].

[311] rgyu sdig-pa mi-dge-ba **de las** tshul **ji-ltar** byas na rang rgyud **nges**-par **thar**-par-'gyur **zhes nyin** mi-dal **mtshan** mi gnyid-par **dus-rtag-tu bdag gis ni 'di-nyid 'ba'-zhig** ces gzhan dgag-sgra ste 'di gcig-pu kho-na **bsam** shing sdig-bshags la 'bad-**pa'i** bya-ba-byed-par **rigs** shing 'thad-pa'o zhes so //

[312] de-yang gos tshon la btso-ba las 'khru-ba gal-che-ba ltar thos-bsam-sgom-pa'i-yon-tan rang-rgyud la mi 'byung-ba 'di sdig-pa mi-dge-ba'i dbang gis yin-pas sdig-sbyang la brtson-pa 'di shin-tu gces gsungs /

> inserted root text: stanza 63
>
> bdag ni mi-shes gti-mug-pas /
> rang-bzhin-kha-na-ma-tho'am /
> bcas-pa'i-sdig-pa gang-yin las /
> gang-yang-rung-ba bgyis-pa rnams /

[313] de-ltar thabs du-mas sdig-pa thams-cad snying-thag-pa-nas bshags-par 'dod-pa'i rtog-pa rang-rgyud la bskyed nas bshags-pa dngos ni gang bshags-pa'i nyes-pa'i rnam-grangs mang-du-yod-kyang rigs sam sde-tshan gyis bsdus na bcas-rang-gnyis su 'du la /

[314] rang-bzhin-gyi-sdig-pa zhes sems-can sus byas na sdig-par-'gyur-ba dang / bcas-pa zhes-pa bcas-ldan-gyi-gang-zag gis bcas-pa-dang-'gal-ba rnams yin la /

[315] de la yang mu-bzhi ste bcas-ldan dge-tshul-slong lta-bu'i sems-can gyi srog-bcad-pa lta-bu bcas-rang gnyis-ka yin-pa dang / des rtva-sngon-po-bcad-pa dang phyi-dro'i-kha-zas lta-bu bcas-sdig yin la rang-bzhin ma yin-pa dang / skyabs-sdom tsam yang zhu ma myong-ba'i gang-zag gis sems-can gyi srog-bcad-pa lta-bu rang-bzhin-gyi-sdig-pa yin la bcas-pa ma yin-pa dang / des rtsva-sngon-bcad-pa lta-bu bcas-rang gnyis-ka ma yin-pa lta-bu ste /

[311] Therefore, (I must ask myself), "**How can I surely free** my mind **from these** causes, my negative deeds and non-virtuous actions?" (The answer is), "**Thinking constantly**, without resting during the **day and** without sleeping at **night, about this alone**, a term that excludes everything else, meaning 'only this one (topic)', and endeavoring to confess (my) negative deeds **is** (most) **appropriate** and reasonable."

[312] Moreover, when the qualities of study, contemplation and meditation do not arise in one's mind, this is said to be due to the power of one's negative deeds and non-virtuous actions. Therefore, endeavoring to purify one's evil deeds it is of utmost importance, just as washing cloth is more important than dying it with color.

> inserted root text: stanza 63
>
> Whatever I may have done
> Due to ignorance and stupidity,
> Among (all) unreported misdeeds of (violating) natural laws
> Or all negative deeds of (breaking) established rules,

[313] After having developed in one's own mind the concept of wishing to confess from the bottom of one's heart all one's negative deeds through various methods, concerning the actual confession, although there are many enumerations of misdeeds that one should confess, one can condense them into two categories or groups: (negative deeds of breaking) established rules and (negative deeds of violating) natural laws.

[314] Any sentient being who has commited what is called 'a negative deed of violating natural laws', has accumulated a negative deed. What is called '(a negative deed of breaking) established rules' refers to a person who has taken on (certain) established rules and who has contradicted these established rules.

[315] In this regard there are four possibilities: (1) If someone like a monk[47] or a fully ordained monk,[48] who has taken on established rules, takes the life of a sentient being, for instance, he has (committed a negative deed of violating) both the natural and the established rules. (2) If he, for instance, cuts fresh grass or if he eats in the evening, he has committed the negative deed of breaking an established rule but not the negative deed of violating a natural law. (3) If a person who has not even received the refuge precepts takes the life of a sentient being, he has committed the negative deed of violating a natural law, but he has not committed the negative deed of breaking an established rule. (4) If that (same lay) person cuts fresh grass, he has committed neither the negative deed of breaking an established rule nor the negative deed of violating a natural law.

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[47] dge tshul; skr. śrāmaṇera

[48] dge slong; skr. bhikṣu

[316] de-yang rtsva-sngon mi gcod-pa la-sogs-pa bcas-rkyang-gi-gnas-rnams kyang ma bsrung na bslab-pa yang-dag-par bsrung mi nus-pas na de bsrung-ba'i-thabs ra-ba lta-bur bcas-pa-mdzad-pa yin te /

[317] bka' las /

> gang-zhig ston-pa thugs-rje'i bstan-pa la //
> sla-bar sems nas 'da'-bar gang-byed-pa //
> de ni de las sdug-bsngal gzhan-dbang thob //
> smrug-tshal[49] breg-pas a-smra'i-tshal nyams ltar //
> dud-'gror skye-'gyur e-la'i-'dab klu bzhin //

zhes gsungs-pa lta-bu'o //

[318] de-ltar nges-par-byas nas **bdag ni** blang-dor la rmongs shing **mi shes**-pa **gti-mug** gi dbang-du-gyur-**pas** mi-dge-ba-bcu la-sogs-pa **rang-bzhin**-gyi-sdig-pa **kha-na-ma-tho-ba** zhes kha-thog-tu-phud-mi-phod-pa ste gang-byas-pa**'am** / phyi-dro'i-kha-zas-zos-pa la-sogs-pa sdom-pa dang 'gal-ba'i **bcas-pa'i-sdig-pa gang-yin**-pa de rnams **las gang-yang rung-ba** ci-dang-**ci-bgyis-pa rnams**

> inserted root: stanza 64
>
> mgon-po'i spyan-sngar mngon-sum-du /
> thal-sbyar sdug-bsngal 'jigs-sems kyis /
> yang-dang-yang-du phyag-'tshal te /
> de-dag thams-cad bshags-par-bgyi /

[319] **mgon-po'i** ste mgon-po rgyal-ba sras-bcas thugs-rje-chen-po dang ldan-pa rnams kyi **spyan-sngar mngon-sum-du** lus ba-spu g.yo mig mchi-ma-'khrugs lag **thal**-mo-**sbyar** te / ngag smre-sngags bcas bshags-tshig / sems 'chi-kha dang bar-do phyi-ma ngang-song-gi **sdug-bsngal** la **'jigs** shing skrag nas gnong-'gyod-drag-po'i **sems kyis yang-dang-yang**-du gus-pas **phyag-'tshal** te nyes-pa dang ltung-ba **de-dag thams-cad** so-sor mi-gsang mi-sbad-par mthol-zhing-**bshags-par-bgyi** zhes so // yang-dang-yang zhes mkhas-pa'i-nyams-ldan-gyi-tshig 'gyod-pa chen-po dgos-pa'i don to //

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[49] All text give smrig tshal. Probably wrong spelling for smrug tshal

[316] If (a monk) does not observe the points that belong exclusively to the established rules, such as not cutting fresh grass and the like, he will be unable to properly observe the trainings. Therefore, (the Buddha) created the established rules as a fence of skillful means for observing (the trainings).

[317] As (the Buddha) said:

> Whoever commits transgression of any kind with a careless mind
> With regard to the doctrine of the compassionate teacher,
> That one will fall under the power of suffering by having done so,
> Just like a mango garden dies when the bamboo grove is cut down,
> Or like the nāga Elapattra, who took rebirth as an animal.

[318] "Having certainly acted in this (non-virtuous) way, **whatever** it may be and whatever **I may have done**, from **among** (all) **unreported misdeeds**—those which one cannot express verbally (due to embarrasment)—**of** (violating) **natural laws,** negative deeds of violating natural laws, such as the ten non-virtuous actions and the like, that I have committed, **or all**[50] **negative deeds of** (breaking) **established rules** by acting contrary to my precepts, for example by eating in the evening, **due to** being oblivious about what to do and what to avoid, having fallen under the power of **ignorance and stupidity**,

> inserted root text: stanza 64
>
> In the direct sight of the protectors,
> With palms joined and mind terrified by the misery (to come),
> I prostrate again and again,
> Confessing all these (misdeeds).

[319] **In the direct sight of the protectors**, meaning the victors and their sons, those endowed with great compassion, **confessing** and laying open, without hiding or concealing, one by one, **all these** misdeeds and downfalls—my body in goose-pimples, my eyes shedding tears, my hands **with palms joined**, my voice in lamentation with the words of confession—**terrified** and frightened **by the misery** (to come) at the moment of death, in the intermediate state and in the lower realms of the next life, with a **mind** of strong remorse and regret, **I prostrate** respectfully **again and again**." 'Again and again' indicates the necessity of great regret and is a scholarly phrase of grandeur.

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[50] lit. whatever

[320] de-ltar rang la rgyal-ba sras-bcas lkog-tu-gyur kyang de-dag la rang lkog-tu-mi-'gyur-bar long-ba'i drung-na mig-ldan bzhin yin-pa'i phyir nyes-pa'i rnam-grangs zhus te bshags na grang-med mang-po'i pha-rol nas de-dag gis ye-shes-kyi-spyan-gyis-gzigs / rdzu-'phrul-gyi-snyan-gyis-gsan / mkhyen-pa'i-thugs-kyis-dgongs-par-'gyur-bas na mngon-sum kyang yin gsungs /

> inserted root text: 65 / first half
>
> 'dren-pa rnams kyis bdag gi sdig /
> nongs-pa lags-par gzung-du-gsol /

[321] **'dren-pa** rgyal-ba sras-bcas **rnams kyis bdag gi sdig**-pa-byas-pas **nongs**-shing nyes-pa-can yin-**pa** la yin-pa'am **lags-par-bzung-du-gsol**-ba'am zhu-ba yin te / bshags-yul gyis nyes-pa 'dri-ba ltar rang gis nyes-pa khas-blangs nas zhu-ba yin gsungs /

> inserted root text: 65 / second half
>
> 'di ni bzang-po ma lags-pas /
> slan-chad bdag ni yong mi bgyid /

[322] bzhi-pa sor-chud-pa'i-stobs ni / sdig-pa mi-dge-ba spyod-pa ngan-pa **'di ni** snang-nas mun-pa'i lam du 'gro zhing rnam-smin shin-tu mi-bzad-pa bskyed cing dam-pa rnams kyis smad-par-bya-ba yin gyi spyod-pa **bzang-po ma lags-pas** dus-de-ring-nas-bzung-ste **slan-chad bdag gis ni** srog-la-bab-kyang **yong**-ye-**mi-'bgyid** cing sdom lags so zhes brjod-pas bshags-yul rgyal-ba sras-bcas kyi sku las 'od-zer sna-tshogs pa byung-bas rang-gzhan-sems-can-thams-cad kyi nyes-ltung sdig-sgrib thams-cad mun-khung du nyi-ma shar-ba ltar sangs-kyis-dag-par bsam mo //

[323] de-yang chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan-bsgren-bar-byed-pa dang / bdud-kyi-rgyal-mtshan-snyil-bar-byed-pa ni gang-zag gnyis te / nyes-pa mi 'byung-ba dang / byung yang bshags-pas dag-par-byed-pa'o // bshags na 'dags-par sdig-pa'i yon-tan te /

[320] Thus, although the victors and their sons remain hidden from me, I am not hidden from them. They are like someone with eyesight in front of a blind person. Therefore, if I confess, enumerating my misdeeds—even from many countless (world systems) away—they see me with their wisdom eyes, hear me with their magical hearing and are aware of me with their wisdom minds. Thus, (their cognition) is explained as being 'direct'.

> inserted root text: 65 / first half
>
> I beseech the guides (of the world)
> To accept me as I am, at fault due to my negative deeds.

[321] **I** request and **beseech the guides**, the victors and their sons, **to accept me as I am** or as someone who is, in fact, **at fault** and (burdened) with mistakes, due to the **negative deeds** that I committed (previously). It is said that you should acknowledge and report your mistakes, as if the objects of confession were questioning you about your faults.

The power of resolve

> inserted root text: 65 / second half
>
> Since these (negative deeds) are ignoble,
> From now on I will never repeat them.

[322] Four, the power of resolve: "**Since these** negative deeds, non-virtuous actions and wicked conduct lead us from light onto the path of darkness, create the most unbearable[51] (karmic) ripening and are criticized by sublime beings, they **are ignoble** conduct. From today onward, meaning **from now on, I will never repeat them**, even at the cost of my life—such is my pledge." Having said this, I imagine that manifold light rays come forth from the objects of confession, the bodies of the victors and their sons, purifying and clearing away all misdeeds, downfalls, negative deeds and obscurations of all sentient beings, myself and others, just like the sun shining into a dark ravine (clears away the darkness).

[323] Furthermore, there are two kinds of people: Those who hoist the victory banner of dharma and those who bring down the victory banner of māra. (For the first), misdeeds never arise; (for the second) they do arise but can be purified through confession. The quality of negative deeds is that they can be purified if confessed.

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[51] Unbearable [mi bzad pa] also connotes 'uncontrollably wild' [ma rungs pa].

[324] bshes-spring las /

gang-zhig sngon-chad bag-med-gyur-pa yang //
phyi-nas bag-dang-ldan-par-gyur-pa ni //
zla-ba sprin-bral lta-bur rnam-mdzes te //
dga'-bo sor-phreng mthong-ldan bde-byed bzhin //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar ro //

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las / sdig-pa-bshags-pa'i-le'u ste gnyis-pa'o //

[325] le'u'i-mtshan ni / **byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las** 'dir yan-lag-bzhi gsungs-pa'i nang-nas brjod-bya'i-gtso-bo sdig-bshags yin-pas-na **sdig-pa bshags-pa'i-le'u ste gnyis-pa'o** //

[324] As the *Suhṛl-lekha* states:

> Someone who has formerly been heedless
> And later becomes heedful
> Is as beautiful as the moon freed of clouds—
> Just like Nanda, Aṅgulimāla, Darśaka[52] and Udayana.

Listing the name of the chapter

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the second, the chapter on Confessing Negativity.

[325] The name of this chapter: Since the confession of negative deeds is the main topic among the four sections that are explained here, (the name of the chapter is): **From the** *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, **the second, the chapter on Confessing Negativity**.

52 Another name for Ajātaśtru.

Khenpo Chöga's Oral Explanations

Khenpo Chöga's Oral Explanations

of

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

Text section 69:

Śāntideva taught the great benefits of bodhicitta in chapter one of the Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra. His praise for the extraordinary qualities of bodhicitta should make students think, "I want to develop this precious bodhicitta in my mind."

Precious bodhicitta, the thought of freeing all beings from suffering and establishing them on the level of buddhahood, is the most noble of all thoughts, endowed with inconceivable qualities. Without bodhicitta buddhahood cannot be achieved. Before a beginning bodhisattva can give rise to absolute bodhicitta, he must first develop relative bodhicitta. A beginner should consider relative bodhicitta to be extremely precious. He should reflect on how relative bodhicitta arises. Does bodhicitta come about accidentially, without causes and conditions [rgyu med rkyen med], or must the mind be prepared and trained in order to create a mind-set conducive to developing bodhicitta?

The *cause* [rgyu] for bodhicitta is the *accumulation* of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs]. Only if the accumulation of merit has been gathered to some extent can bodhicitta develop in one's mind. The most effective methods for gathering the accumulation of merit are condensed into a practice called 'the seven branches' or 'the seven sections' [yan lag bdun pa]. Thus, the practice of the 'seven sections' is the direct cause for the rise of bodhicitta.

The *condition* [rkyen] for the rise of bodhicitta is reliance on a spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen], a teacher from whom one receives the bodhisattva precepts [sdom pa len pa]. Once one has received the bodhisattva precepts from a teacher, one must repeatedly retake them oneself mentally from the buddhas and bodhisattvas through a daily practice called 'the liturgy of receiving the bodhisattva precepts' [byang sdom len chog]. Diligent beginning bodhisattvas renew their bodhisattva precepts six times every day since a beginner's mind loses the precepts easily.

The buddhas, bodhisattvas and teachers are the conditions for all happiness [bde ba thams cad kyi rkyen]. They are the condition for the attainment of liberation and omniscience [thar pa dang rnam mkhyen thob pa'i rkyen]. The cause for the attainment of happiness, liberation and omniscience is the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos].

Without the cause of gathering the accumulation of merit and the condition of a spiritual friend, bodhicitta cannot be developed in one's mind. In other words, a noble thought does not arise easily in the mind of an ordinary person. Even if we understand that a noble mind-set is endowed with qualities and is something desirable, it still does not come about easily. That is why the great Indian master Nāgārjuna said *you need to perfect the accumulations* [tshogs rdzogs pa]!

Asaṅga taught that bodhicitta arises only in *a pure mind* [sems dvangs pa], never in a polluted mind [sems rnyog po]. Asaṅga said that a pure mind is the cause [rgyu] for bodhicitta. Only a mind that is rooted in 'the three trainings' [bslab pa gsum] of a bodhisattva is considered a pure mind. When a practitioner's mind is not firm in 'the training of discipline' [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], in 'the training of concentration' [ting

nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and in 'the training of wisdom-knowledge' [shes rab kyi bslab pa], it will never be pure. The term 'a pure mind' [sems dvangs ma] has great meaning.

The discipline of a bodhisattva is 'discipline free from regret' ['gyod pa med pa'i tshul khrims]. Since he abstains from harming any sentient being, a bodhisattva's mind no longer experiences regret or guilt about former misdeeds and thus becomes very pure. A beginning bodhisattva must at least maintain (1) 'the discipline of abstaining from negative conduct' [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]. A mind polluted with harmful intentions can never give rise to bodhicitta.

Next, a bodhisattva trains in (2) 'the discipline of gathering virtuous dharmas' [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims]. When practicing virtue, however, a bodhisattva must maintain 'discipline free from arrogance' [rlom sems med pa'i tshul khrims]. A bodhisattva keeping discipline can easily fall into spiritual arrogance, taking pride in his impeccable conduct, adopting a position of moral superiority. Such a mistaken attitude toward one's discipline will spoil the purity of one's mind.

Moreover, a bodhisattva aspires to practice (3) 'the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings' [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims]. Without being able to maintain at least the discipline of refraining from negative conduct and the discipline of gathering virtuous dharmas free from arrogance, concentration will not arise in a bodhisattva's mind. A mind ridden with regret, guilt and arrogance can never develop genuine concentration.

Once the bodhisattva's mind is well-grounded in the three abovementioned disciplines, it will become naturally still, and concentration will arise easily. Out of a mind of stillness and concentration, wisdom-knowledge can easily manifest. Thus, the bodhisattva's mind will become very peaceful [zhi ba], tame ['dul ba] and relaxed [glod po]. It is further said that a pure mind leads to confidence in the dharma [rig pa dvangs bas chos la nges shes skye].

In addition to guaranteeing that discipline is maintained, practicing methods for gathering the accumulation of merit will make your mind-stream pure [rgyud gtsang ma]. In chapters two and three of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, Śāntideva teaches eight sections [yan lag brgyad] for gathering the accumulation [tshogs bsags pa] of merit:

1. The section on presenting offerings [mchod pa 'bul ba'i yan lag].
2. The section on paying respect [phyag 'tshal ba'i yan lag].
3. The section on going for refuge [skyabs su 'gro ba'i yan lag].
4. The section on confessing negative deeds [sdig pa bshags pa'i yan lag].
5. The section on rejoicing [rjes su yi rang ba'i yan lag].
6. The section on requesting the buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bskor bar bskul ba'i yan lag].
7. The section on requesting the buddhas not to enter into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las mi 'da' bar gsol ba 'debs pa'i yan lag].

8. The section on dedicating the root of virtue for the benefit of others [dge rtsa gzhan don du bngos ba'i yan lag].

Traditionally, this set is called 'the seven sections' or 'the seven branches' [yan lag bdun pa]. Śāntideva adds refuge as the eighth. Through the practice of the seven or eight sections, the five afflictions [nyon mongs lnga] will be reduced, the accumulation of merit will be gathered in an easy manner, without any hardship, and all obstacles for developing bodhicitta will be removed.

Making offerings [mchod pa 'bul ba] is taught as a remedy for miserliness [ser sna] and as an antidote to the craving of attachment [chags pa'i sred pa]. Paying respect or offering prostrations [phyag 'tshal ba] has the purpose of annihilating pride and arrogance [nga rgyal]. Taking refuge distances one from the wrong paths, and through bodhicitta you distance yourself from the lower paths.

Confession [bshags pa] is an antidote to ignorance [gti mug].[53] You accept and acknowledge all the mistakes you have committed in this and all former lifetimes based on ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. Normally, we cling to our wrong actions and mistakes. Confessing negativity or unskillful volitional action [sdig pa] serves the purpose of annihilating the attachment of clinging to what is wrong [sdug cha la 'dzin pa'i 'dod chags], annihilating the attachment of holding on to what is inferior [dman pa la 'dzin pa sred pa], and annihilating the attachment to ignorance [rmongs pa'i sred pa].

Rejoicing [rjes su yi rang] is an antidote to envy and jealousy [phrag dog]. Envy and jealousy are the fear that others are better than you are, or that others own something you lack. Rejoicing in the qualities, achievements, and merit of others destroys attachment to this fear ['jigs sred]. Requesting the buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma is another remedy for ignorance, since when the buddhas turn the wheel of dharma the sun of wisdom arises.

Supplicating the buddhas not to enter into nirvāṇa is also an antidote to ignorance. Furthermore, it has the purpose of asuring that the Buddha's teaching remains for a long time. It incorporates as well the request for the longevity of one's teacher [bla ma] and spiritual guide [dge ba'i bshes gnyen]. The teacher is the root of the dharma. The transmission of the 'dharma of statements' [lung gi chos] and the 'dharma of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos] is based on one's teacher and spiritual guide. Without a teacher, one is cut off from the root of the dharma. Therefore, one requests the buddhas, bodhisattvas and teachers to remain for a long time.

Dedication is a special feature that distinguishes Buddhism from other spiritual systems. Other spiritual systems do not teach giving to others all the goodness [dge ba] one has acquired through one's practice. All Buddhist practice must be framed by 'the three excellences' [dam pa gsum]: 1) bodhicitta, the excellent beginning [sbyor ba sems

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[53] 'Ignorance' [gti mug] can be translated as ignorance, stupidity, delusion or dullness. It connotes an ignorance that is dull and dark. 'Ignorance' or 'non-awareness' [ma rig pa] connotes 'not knowing' [ha ma go ba], the 'absence of awareness'.

bskyed dam pa]; 2) non-conceptual practice, the excellent main part [dngos gzhi dmigs med dam pa]; and 3) dedication, the excellent conclusion [rjes bsngo ba dam pa]. These practices are the outstanding features of Buddha's teachings. Dedication is considered a supreme method to cut through clinging and fixation ['dzin pa].

Generally, the terms 'offering' [mchod pa], 'generosity' [sbyin pa], 'confession' [bshags pa], and 'dedication' [bsngo ba] have more or less the same connotation. All four practices force you to open your hand and to give something away. Without opening your hand, you cannot offer anything. It is impossible to present a gift and still hold on to it. You must let go of whatever you offer or give away.

The dharma teaches the overcoming of attachment [chags pa] and fixation ['dzin pa]. If you treasure something very much and hold it most dear [phyogs tu 'gyur ba la 'dzin pa], then in order to overcome this fixation, you should present it as an offering. In order to cut fixation to your possessions, donate them to others. That is generosity.

Through confession you distance yourself from holding on to what is inferior [dman pa la 'dzin pa]. For instance, if you have killed someone you must first realize that you have committed a deed with very negative consequences for yourself. If you want to overcome these consequences, you need to distance yourself from what you have done. The first step is to understand that what you did was a mistake. Then you aspire to rid yourself of this negative action. Confession has the purpose of freeing yourself from all the negative deeds that you have committed in this and all former lifetimes. Confession means casting away all fixations on negativity that you have been holding in your polluted mind from former lifetimes [tshe sngon nas sdig pa'i sems nang la sdug cha 'dzin yod pa thams cad].

Through offerings you annihilate your fixation on what you hold most dear, and through confession you annihilate your fixation on your own negative patterns. Presenting offerings, practicing generosity, making confessions and dedicating your merit have a single aim [dmigs yul]—the destruction of fixations ['dzin pa chad pa'i phyir du]. Training in these four practices loosens up your habit of attachment to the positive as well as the negative. This important advice is imbedded in the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Śāntideva's first stanza concerns offerings of things that belong to an owner [bdag pos yongs su bzung ba'i mchod pa], offerings of which you can think, "These belong to me." This includes things you have bought or received as presents, things you consider to be your personal property. Your personal property is your most treasured possession. Traditionally, the greatest attachment is to precious metals such as gold, and to precious stones. To overcome this strong attachment it is customary to offer gold when requesting teachings from a great master.

If you make an offering in order to overcome your own attachment, you are practicing virtue [dge ba]. However, if you offer your teacher gold, thinking, "I must give him gold to receive these teachings because he likes gold," you are holding a wrong view, and you accumulate negativity [sdig pa]. For the Buddha whether or not you present

offerings makes absolutely no difference. You present offerings only to reduce your own attachment to things you hold dear. This is a very important point.

Text section 70:

Among all accumulations of merit, presenting offerings is said to be the greatest. For this reason Atiśa refused to give the bodhisattva vows easily. When his students requested the bodhisattva precepts, he said, "Set up offerings!" When the students had laid some offerings out, he told them, "That won't do!" After refusing the students a few times, he finally and reluctantly [da gzod] agreed to give the bodhisattva precepts. Atiśa insisted on perfect offerings because beautifully arrayed offerings generate purity of mind. Any beautiful arrangement inspires and calms the mind. The devotional act of arranging offerings opens the mind and creates a serene atmosphere.

Text section 72 / stanza 1:

For your offering to be meritorious you must present it with *the three-fold purity* or *the three-fold perfection* [yang dag pa rnam pa gsum]: *pure motivation* [bsam pa dag pa], *pure object* [zhing dag pa], and *pure substance* [dngos po dag pa]. You need a pure motivation for making offerings [mchod pa'i sems rnam par dag pa] so that 1) the negative deeds [sdig pa] and obscurations [sgrib pa] of yourself and others will be purified, and 2) so that the merit and wisdom that lie dormant in everybody's mind will be actualized. You present offerings without being stingy, without being proud, without showing off or trying to impress anyone. Do not present offerings to make a big name for yourself. If you present offerings with the intention of becoming famous, your amount of merit will be very small. This kind of offering is called a 'pretentious offering' [ngom mchod], given to aquire fame. Present offerings without jealousy [phrag dog] or competitiveness, without the attitude: "That person gave so much, I can't stand it. I should outdo him and present more."

You should rather present the offerings with a pure motivation, such as, "I present this offering to the Buddha so that this precious bodhicitta may arise in the minds of all beings." The attitude of bodhicitta and a mind involved in ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin], such as a mind concerned with fame and good reputation, contradict each other. Ego-clinging focuses on oneself, while bodhicitta focuses on others.

Text section 73-74 / stanza 1:

You need a 'pure object to which you offer' [mchod yul rnam par dag pa]. The three jewels [dkon mchog gsum] are such a pure object. You should not present offerings to inferior objects like demons and spirits. They can be the recipient of your generosity but not of your offerings. Presenting offerings to spirits will never give the same results as presenting an offering to the three jewels.

The three jewels are Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. The Sanskrit word 'buddha' primarily means 'realization' [rtogs pa], the realization of the natural state. It also

connotes 'awakening from sleep' [gnyid sad pa] and 'unfolding' or 'opening up', like the unfolding [rgyas pa] of a lotus flower. The Buddha has awakened from all sleep states of ignorance [ma rig pa'i gnyid thams cad sangs], and his mind has opened up to all fields of knowledge [shes bya thams cad la blo rgyas pa]. Buddha's realization has unfolded like a lotus flower that has risen above the swamp.

The tathāgatas [de bzhin gshegs pa rnams] are *those who have gone in accord with the natural state as it (actually) is* [chos nyid de bzhin nyid dang rjes su mthun par gshegs pa]. Because the Buddha has realized the natural state as it is, he is called the Tathāgata. As he has himself realized without any error the natural state as it is [chos nyid de bzhin nyid], he can help others achieve this same view. 'Gone' [gshegs pa] connotes 'realization' [rtogs pa] and 'knowledge' [mkhyen pa]. The Tathāgata is the one who 'has gone' to the view of the natural state as it is, who 'has realized' the natural state as it is. Thus, the term 'tathāgata' means 'the one who has realized the natural state as it actually is'.

The term 'the natural state' [chos nyid] is synonymous with 'the expanse of truth' [chos kyi dbyings; skr. dharmadhatu] and with 'the expanse of emptiness' [stong pa nyid gyi dbyings]. It is a state free from all elaborations [spros bral] and free from all philosophical positions [mtha' bral].

The dharma has two aspects: the truth of cessation ['gog bden] and the truth of the path [lam bden]. That which frees one from attachment is the truth of the path [gang gis chags pa dang bral bar byed pa lam gyi bden pa], and that which is free from all fixations is the truth of cessation [gang zhig 'dzin pa thams cad dang bral song ba 'di 'gog pa'i bden pa]. The truth of the path is non-defiling wisdom [zag med shes rab], the wisdom that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab tshul ldan dang bcas pa lam gyi bden pa]. Cessation in the context of the Hīnayāna teachings is the disruption of saṃsāra's continuity ['khor ba'i rgyun chad pa]. Any cause for taking rebirth within saṃsāra has been eradicated. In the context of the Mahāyāna teachings, cessation refers to the wisdom of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi ye shes].

The Mahāyāna saṃgha refers to the 'sons of the victors', the bodhisattvas, from the first level [sa; skr. bhumi] onward. The most prominent members of the Mahāyāna saṃgha are the 'eight great close sons', the tenth level bodhisattvas who constantly stayed with the Buddha. They are called the 'eight close sons' because they reached the tenth bodhisattva level and are thus close to the level of Buddha's realization. They are also called the 'sons of the Victor' [rgyal ba'i sras; skr. jinaputra] because they are considered to be Buddha's heart sons [thugs kyi sras].

The eight great close sons [nye ba'i sras chen brgyad] are: Mañjuśrī ['jam dbyangs], Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje], Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug], Kṣitigarbha [sa yi snying po], Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī [sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba], Ākāśagarbha [nam mkha'i snying po], Maitreya [byams pa] and Samantabhadra [kun tu bzang po].

Bodhisattvas aspire with relentless courage to unexcelled enlightenment. They are the descendants of the Buddha; empowered with the treasury of the sublime dharma, they are the custodians of all remaining beings, and it is they who will take over the

kingdom of inconceivable wisdom. Thus, they are called the 'children of the Victor' [rgyal ba'i sras]. There are four factors that establish the father-child relationship between the Buddha and the bodhisattvas:

1. They are Buddha's descendants [rgyal ba'i gdung 'dzin pa] because they traverse the path to enlightenment and uphold his lineage without interruption, just as the child of a king upholds the family lineage.
2. They have power over the treasury of the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos kyi mdzod la dbang ba], having inherited all of Buddha's teachings, just as the child of a king inherits the treasury of the kingdom. They also transmit the teachings of the Buddha to others.
3. They are the guardians of all remaining beings [gdul bya'i lhag ma skyong ba]. After the Buddha's nirvāṇa, they undertake to care for all future sentient beings.
4. They are the ones suited to inherit the kingdom of inconceivable wisdom [bsam mi khyab pa'i ye shes kyi rgyal thabs la dbang du bsgyur du rung ba]. They all will attain the inconceivable wisdom of the Buddha, complete enlightenment.

First, the Buddha plants the seed of the family [rigs kyi sa bon bskrun pa]. At the very beginning, when the Buddha taught his bodhisattva students, he made them develop the seed of virtue and bodhicitta. He then furthers renunciation and realization, continuing to guide them along the paths and levels. Like a father who feeds and raises his children, he is always there to help and guide the bodhisattvas.

Finally, when they have reached the tenth bodhisattva level, he empowers them as dharma kings [chos kyi rgyal po] through the 'great empowerment of light rays' ['od zer chen po'i dbang bskur]. This is like handing over the power to a royal child, empowering the crown prince to be king. Without such empowerment the bodhisattvas cannot attain enlightenment. This describes the 'pure object', the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Text section 75 / stanza 1:

Furthermore, you need 'pure offering substance' [mchod gyi dngos po rnam par dag pa]. What you offer must be untainted by negative deeds and should not be inferior. Do not offer your cheapest or ugliest possession, but rather your most valuable and appreciated objects. Offer that to which you cling the most.

As for the manner of offering [mchod pa phul tshul], you should arrange the seven offerings bowls [bdun tshar] and a lamp [mar me] in a beautiful fashion. Clean your shrine and the offering articles, and fill the vessels with clean and fresh substances. Do not consciously offer dirty or old things.

The term *noble substance* [rgyu bzang ba] refers to something that is not acquired through negative deeds [sdig pa]. A noble substance must have a pure origin.

The offerings should not be made to serve one's *pride* [nga rgyal] or to serve *pretentiousness in offerings* [ngom mchod]. Some people make spectacular offerings, aiming to display their wealth and piety, hoping to impress other people and be praised. They want to make sure that they give the most lavish amount of offerings and that their great generosity is widely acknowledged. Such an offering furthers pride and arrogance rather than reducing attachment and fixation.

Offerings should not be tainted by *miserliness* [ser sna]. Practitioners should not save money and time by presenting inexpensive items and holding back precious things. When your most cherished objects are offered, the offering becomes a remedy against miserliness. You should also not develop a miserly attitude when you see other people making vast offerings. Don't think, "Why are they wasting so much money on offerings!" This attitude is called *malevolence* ['jur 'gegs], disliking that other people make offerings and causing obstacles against their generosity [gzhan gyis sbyin pa gtong ba la gegs byed pa].

The term *miserliness* [ser sna] describes a person who does not want to part with any of his own possessions. The term *malevolence* ['jur 'gegs] refers to someone who cannot bear to see other people use their possessions and wealth on offerings, donations and so forth, and who even feels miserly regarding other people's wealth.

Offerings should be presented in a mindful and alert manner. Arrange the offerings beautifully, with a pure mind infused with respect and devotion. Avoid carelessness, disrespect and any negative state of mind as this will create only negative karma.

Text section 76:

Carefully arranging your offerings is a way of keeping discipline. Lay out the clean offering bowls side by side, neither too close nor too far apart. They should be straight, with none out of line. The water should be clean with no grains, hair, dust or insects floating in it. The bowls should be filled with care, full but not quite to the brim, avoiding spilling any water on the offering table.

In the morning you should set out the seven offering bowls and the butter lamp from right to left, as seen from the perspective of the shrine.[54] When you empty out the bowls in the evening you begin from the left and work your way to the right, again as seen from the perspective of the shrine. It is said that you leave the distance of one barley grain length between each of the offering bowls and should fill the bowls with water up to one barley grain length below the brim.

1. The first bowl contains water that represents the clean, sweet-tasting drinking water [mchod yon; skr. argham] that is offered to the mouths of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

[54] This means from left to right as seen from the perspective of the practitioner.

2. The second bowl also contains water, representing the pure and refreshing water for washing [zhabs bsil; skr. padam] that is offered to the feet and hands of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
3. The third bowl is filled with rice and has a flower placed in it. This represents a blooming flower [me tog; skr. pushpe] and is offered to the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
4. The fourth is a bowl again filled with rice and with incense sticks planted in it. It represents the fine smelling incense [gdug spos; skr. dhupe] offered to the noses of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
5. The fifth offering is the butter lamp vessel [mar me kong bu] filled with melted butter or oil and containing a wick [sdong bu]. A candle will do just as well. This illuminating lamp [mar me; skr. aloke] is offered to the eyes (mind) (???) of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
6. The sixth offering is a bowl filled with scented water representing fragrant perfume [dri chab; skr. gandhe] and is offered to the bodies of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
7. The seventh offering is a bowl of rice with a small food torma[55] placed on top of it, representing the food [zhal zas; skr. naividya] offered to the mouths of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
8. The eighth offering is a bowl of rice with two cymbals [ting shags] placed on top of it, representing music [rol mo; skr. shapda] offered to the ears of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

To simplify, you may also just offer clean water and a butter lamp. After you have set up the offering bowls you should recite OM AH HUNG a few times, while sprinkling a few drops of clean water on the offering bowls with a strand of kusha grass that you hold in your right hand. This will bring the blessings of Buddha's body, speech and mind down and will dispel any demons or spirits that might be near the offerings.

Imagine that you are offering all various offering substances, which will be described later in the text, to the buddhas and bodhisattvas and consider that they actually accept the offerings. Imagine further that they grant their blessings to you and all sentient beings. That is what you should keep in mind every morning when you offer the seven bowls and the butter lamp or candle.

These simple ways of presenting offerings are primarily designed to remedy miserliness and gather the accumulation of merit. Through this merit you will be able to generate kindness and compassion in your mind. You will be able to generate bodhicitta.

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[55] A torma in Tibetan culture is an offering cake made of dough. Today, a cookie or something similar will serve just as well.

Whatever we cling to will bring us suffering. Eventually, we will lose whatever we hold dear. It is a law of impermanence that whatever comes together will be dispersed. A practitioner who has cut through all clinging and fixation has nothing left to lose. Someone who is truly free from all clinging and fixation, can experience all phenomena as if they belonged to him. Therefore, it is said: "Whatever you give away is yours. Whatever you hold on to belongs to others." Anything you can lose belongs to others. If you have nothing to lose, everything belongs to you.

Text section 77:

Offerings that do not belong to an owner are those things such as mountains, lakes, rivers and so forth, which do not belong to anyone. With regard to such objects people think, "They are not mine."

In general, presenting offerings that belong to an owner is said to remedy clinging to a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin] and presenting offerings that do not belong to an owner is a remedy for clinging to the identity of phenomena [chos kyi bdag 'dzin].

There are two kinds of remedies: gross remedies [rags pa sgo nas kyi gnyen po] and remedies that eradicate something from the very root [rtsa ba drung 'byin gyi gnyen po]. These two kinds of offerings, offerings that belong to an owner and offerings that do not belong to an owner, are considered gross remedies and will only weaken the two types of ego-clinging to some extent; they do not annihilate ego-clinging completely. The true remedy against both types of ego-clinging is only the wisdom that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. This wisdom completely eradicates both types of ego-clinging from the very root.

Ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin] implies holding something as real [bden par 'dzin pa]. To actually believe that you have an identity, to identify yourself with a position and act upon it, is called clinging to a subject, clinging to the identity of a person. To truly believe that the material world is real and physically exists is called clinging to objects, clinging to the identity of phenomena.

Offerings that do not belong to an owner do not require detailed and lengthy visualization [bskyed rim]. You need not even evoke a mental picture. Simply reading or reciting the description of these offerings mindfully is sufficient. One must understand what is meant by vastness. Your offerings should be not only as vast as the 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum 'jig rten], which are one billion world systems, but as vast as the 'Great Glacial Ocean of Vairocana' [rnam snang gangs chen mtsho]. Offer everything beautiful and precious that could possibly exist in all oceanic world systems.

The Buddha manifests on the saṃbhogakāya level as Buddha Vairocana, named 'Great Glacial Ocean Vairocana' [rnam snang gangs chen mtsho]. This saṃbhogakāya buddha is also undifferentiated from all the buddhas of the ten directions. Within each pore of his body infinite world systems appear, and within each atom of these worlds is an infinity of other worlds and infinite forms of Vairocana. Each form of Vairocana

in turn contains infinite buddhas and buddha fields. Vairocana encompasses the entire universe, and the entire universe constitutes Vairocana.

Our world system, called the 'world system of endurance' [mi mjed 'jig rten gyi khams, skr. saha loca dhatu], is an infinitely small particle within these oceanic world systems. Vairocana's palm holds twenty-five lotuses, stacked one on top of the other, each of which contains billions of trichiliocosms.[56] On the thirteenth lotus tier, our trichiliocosm is merely one among billions. One trichiliocosm equal to one billion world systems and is the field of influence of one nirmāṇakāya, in our case the Buddha Śākyamuni.

Text sections 78-79 / stanza 2:

Visualize all kinds of beautiful flowers, such as white, yellow, red and blue lotuses, all kinds of fruits and medicinal plants, all kinds of precious stones and gems from the worlds of gods, humans and nāgas.

Imagine the four great descending rivers ['bab chu bzhi] that spring from the four sides of Lake Manasarovar [mtsho ma dros pa / mtsho ma pham] next to Mount Kailāsa. The river Ganga to the east springs from an elephant mouth [glang chen kha nas 'bab]. The river Sindhu to the south springs from the mouth of a peacock [rma bya'i kha nas 'bab]. The river Vakṣu to the west springs from the mouth of a horse [rta yi kha nas 'bab], and the river Sītā to the north springs from a lion's mouth.[57]

Thus, imagine lakes, ponds and rivers of pure water endowed with the following eight qualities [yan lag brgyad ldan gyi chu]: (1) cooling [bsil ba], (2) good-tasting or sweet-tasting [zhim pa / mngar ba], (3) light [yang ba], (4) soft ['jam pa], (5) clear [dvangs pa], (6) unstained or clean [dri ma med pa / gtsang ba], (7) not harmful for the stomach [lto la mi gnod pa], and (8) not harmful for the throat [mgrin pa la mi gnod pa].

Imagine many medicinal substances such as the 'six excellent substances' [bzang po drug]: (1) nutmeg, which is excellent for the heart [dza ti snying gi bzang po], (2) bamboo manna, which is excellent for the lungs [cu gang glo ba'i bzang po], (3) saffron, which is excellent for the liver [gur gum mchin pa'i bzang po], (4) cloves, which are excellent for the arteries [li shi srog rtsa'i bzang po], (5) cardamom, which is excellent for the kidneys [sug smel mkhal ba'i bzang po], and (6) castor oil, which is excellent for the spleen [ka ko la mtsher pa'i bzang po]. Offering medicinal plants to the Buddha generates great merit. One will be free of diseases in future lifetimes and will also have the capacity to alleviate the sickness of others through medicine.

You may imagine the 'five precious substances' [rin chen sna lnga]: gold [gser], silver [dngul], turquoise [g.yu], coral [byu ru] and pearl [mu tig], also listed as gold, silver, copper [zangs], iron [lcags] and tin [gsha' tshe]. Imagine the 'five kinds of grain' ['bru sna

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56 The third order of a thousand world systems [stong gsum] or one trichiliocosm means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems.

57 See *Myriad Worlds*, page 112

lnga]: barley [nas], rice ['bras], wheat [gro], peas [sran ma] and sesame [til] or alternatively: wheat, barley, peas, buckwheat [bra bo] and oats [so ba]. Further, imagine the 'three medicinal fruits' ['bras bu gsum]: arura [a ru ra], barura [ba ru ra] and kyurora [skyu ro ra].

Imagine beautiful or pleasing lakes such as the seven pleasure lakes [rol pa'i mtho bdun] on top of Mount Sumeru. They are: (1) the salt lake [tshva'i mtsho], (2) the wine lake [chang gi mtsho], (3) the water lake [chu'i mtsho], (4) the milk lake ['o ma'i mtsho], (5) the yogurt lake [zho'i mtsho], (6) the butter lake [mar gyi mtsho], and (7) the honey lake [sbrang rtsi'i mtsho].

Text sections 80-81 / stanza 3:

Visualize beautiful jewel mountains [rin chen ri bo] composed of various precious metals and stones, for example the seven golden mountains on top of Mount Sumeru: (1) Rim holder [mu khyud 'dzin], (2) Bent [rnam 'dud], (3) Horse Ear [rta rna], (4) Pleasant to Look at [lta na sdug], (5) Forest of Acacia Trees [seng ldeng can], (6) Plough Holder [gshol mda' 'dzin], and (7) Yoke Holder [gnya' shing 'dzin]. (???) Sanskrit names.

Mount Sumeru, the king of all mountains, is made of four precious substances [rin chen sna bzhi las grub pa ri'i rgyal po ri rab]: silver in the east [shar dngul], beryl [lho vaidurya] in the south, ruby in the west [nub pad ma ra ga], and gold in the north [byang gser]. (???) The entire space on each side of Mount Sumeru shines with the respective color of that side of the mountain. That is why the sky above our continent, Jambudvīpa in the south [lho 'dzam bu gling] is blue. As space itself has no color, the blue appearance of the sky is called the 'ornamentation of space' [rgyan gyi nam mkha'].

Think of remote forests, vast pastures and beautiful parks inhabited by multi-colored birds and tame antelopes. Bring to mind trees bedecked with flowers and laden with fragrant fruit, permeating the whole area with wonderful smells and aromas. Visualize beautiful and remote *forest clearings* [nags tshal gyi mthongs], where animals graze amidst sandalwood trees.

Text sections 82 / stanza 4:

Offer the best fragrances of the worlds of gods, men and nāgas, natural incense [lhan skyes kyi spos] and manufactured incense [sbyar byung gi spos]. Recall the wish-fulfilling tree of the god realms, which immediately grants all wishes. Think of jewel trees like those found in *Sukhāvatī* [bde ba chen], the buddha field of Buddha Amitābha ['od dpag med]. Imagine offering anything worthy to be offered to the three jewels.

The *seven precious substances* [rin po che sna bdun] are: 1) ruby [pad ma ra ga], 2) sapphire [indranila], 3) beryl [vaidurya], 4) emerald [mar gad], 5) diamond [rdo rje pha lam], 6) pearl [mu tig], and 7) coral [byu ru]. Alternatively they are: 1) beryl [bai dur ya], 2) gold [gser], 3) silver [dngul], 4) crystal [rdo shel], 5) quartz [spug], 6) red pearl [mu tig dmar po], and 7) emerald [rdo'i snying po / mar gad].

Text sections 83-84 / stanza 5:

Offer beautiful lakes and pools adorned with lotuses where various water birds, wild geese and swans, swim majestically and sing melodious songs in the most beautiful voices. Tibet's *four great and famous lakes* [grags pa'i mtsho chen bzhi] are: Manasarovar [mtsho ma pham], Tengri Nor [gnam mtsho], Yardrok [yar 'brog mtsho] and Kokonor [mtsho sngon po].

Visualize all beautiful objects, everything that exists within the infinite reaches of space. Imagine sun, moon and sparkling stars. Think of all the treasures and works of art; think of good-looking men and women. You may even offer the Buddha, bodhisattvas, arhats, and pratyekabuddhas to the three jewels. You may offer all the merit and goodness that exists in all infinite world systems to the Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. Offer everything that does not belong to an owner. Do not think, "Because they don't belong to me, I can't offer them."

Offerings that do not belong to an owner have the *special distinction of faultlessness* or 'the special distinction of being free from misdeeds' [kha na ma tho ba med pa'i khyad par], just like the riches of the northern continent *Kurava* [byang sgra mi snyan], a continent mentioned in Indian legend and cosmology. The distinction of being free from misdeeds means that all things that do not belong to an owner are free from negativity [sdig pa med pa], as they cannot be the object of quarrels. It is said that the people from the northern continent Kurava eat wild rice which is not ploughed or sown, their clothes and ornaments come from the wish-fulfilling tree [dpag bsam gyi shing] and the noble vase [bum pa bzang po]. Whatever they think of or wish for manifests instantaneously.

The term 'misdeed' [kha na ma tho ba] actually means 'an unreported misdeed', 'a misdeed that has been kept secret', 'a misdeed that was left untold', literally, 'something that has not reached the mouth'. Buddhist practitioners, particularly monks, must confess all their misdeeds by admitting them openly and spelling them out. All that is kept secret and not confessed will not be purified. Remaining a misdeed, its karmic fruition will eventually ripen.

Misdeeds are of two types: 'misdeeds of violating a natural law' [rang bzhin gyi kha na ma tho ba] and 'misdeeds of breaking an established rule' [bcas pa'i sdig pa]. Violating a natural law means commiting any of the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu]. Breaking an established rule refers to breaking rules that were created by the Buddha for the saṃgha, like the rule against monks eating after noon.

Text sections 85 / stanza 6:

Offer all that was discussed above by mentally creating it, and imagining that it is actually yours. Thinking, "I offer all this to the supreme among all humans, to the sublime Buddha Śākyamuni. I offer all this to his heart sons, the bodhisattvas, the sublime saṃgha. I offer all this to the sublime dharma, which dwells in the mind of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. All this I offer with heartfelt devotion and in the most

excellent way to the three jewels. Great compassionate ones, please accept my offering and consider me with your great kindness so that the precious bodhicitta takes birth in my mind for the sake of all sentient beings." Visualize that the three jewels actually accept your offerings with great delight and that they shower you with their blessings.

In general the practice of making offerings is designed to loosen up attachment and also to gather the accumulation of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs]. In particular, the purpose of presenting these offerings that do not belong to an owner is to reduce one's clinging to objects, one's clinging to the existence of phenomena [chos kyi bdag 'dzin]. You totally disown anything you could possibly become attached to by offering it to the three jewels.

Once you have given something away, you should not think about it any longer. Often, however, when we give someone a precious gift, we continue to worry about whether our gift is being treated with the proper respect and used as we intended. Our attachment to something that we have given away shows that we have not really disowned it. We might have given the object away, but we have severed neither our attachment [chags pa] to it nor our fixation ['dzin pa] on it. Our mind is still following the object and we continue to try to control how it is handled.

Truly giving something away, truly offering something, means totally disowning it. Whether or not the recipient treats your gift with respect or throws it away is no longer your concern. The moment you offer or give something away, your concern about it must cease. In Tibet there is a saying: "Once the torma has been thrown out, it makes no difference if it's eaten by dogs or birds." If you really know how to disown what you offer, then making offerings becomes a supreme means of gathering merit.

We make offerings and pray so that the precious bodhicitta will be born in our minds. Understand bodhicitta in two ways: in its aspect of compassion [snying rje] and in its aspect of knowledge [shes rab]. What is the special compassion unique to the bodhicitta motivation? With compassion one focuses on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the steadfast resolve: "I will free all beings from suffering." This is the compassion aspect of the bodhicitta motivation.

What, then, is the knowledge aspect of the bodhicitta motivation? With knowledge one focuses on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the similar resolve: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." Relative bodhicitta is conceptual compassion and conceptual knowledge, while absolute bodhicitta, self-existing wisdom [rang byung ye shes], is non-conceptual compassion and non-conceptual wisdom-knowledge.

Relative bodhicitta is the wish to liberate all sentient beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment. This is the most noble of all thoughts as it combines compassion and knowledge.

Knowledge [shes rab] here means the knowledge of the infinite suffering of beings as well as the knowledge of the qualities of the three jewels. Such knowledge always inherently contains compassion. The bodhisattva knows why beings must be liberated from suffering and he knows what will liberate them—the dharma. He knows that the

root of all suffering is clinging to an ego. He knows that ego-clinging is a momentary concept [glo bur gyi rnam rtog], and he understands that the ceaseless perpetuation of this momentary thought, this momentary clinging to an ego, causes beings infinite suffering.

The bodhisattva has the knowledge of egolessness, of buddha nature. He understands that 'ego' or 'identity' ultimately does not exist. He understands that he and all beings are caught up in delusion. Therefore, he naturally has the wish to free beings [bsgral 'dod gyi blo] from the delusion of ego-clinging, from suffering. He understands the necessity of liberation for all beings including himself.

Bodhicitta means to know why all beings must be liberated and to feel compassion for them. If one wishes to liberate only oneself from suffering, that attitude is not bodhicitta. Wishing to attain liberation only for oneself shows continued involvement in ego-clinging. The thought, "I want to be free," is based on ego-clinging; with this kind of attitude a practitioner will not be able to free his mind.

Text section 86 / stanza 6:

The Buddha is called the *Muni*, the capable one [thub pa], who is able to perform the activities of body, speech and mind without being on guard. Muni means 'able to do' [byed thub pa]. 'Unguarded' [bsrung ba med pa], or the 'three-fold way of being unguarded' [bsrung ba med pa rnam gsum], refers to the qualities of the Buddha. As the Buddha does not have the slightest defect [skyon] in body, speech and mind, he need not be on guard, he need not be shy ['dzem pa med pa] in front of others, nor need he pay conscious attention [gzab gzab med pa] to his actions. We ordinary people must be on guard when we act. If we are not careful, we will make mistakes. Buddha performs his activities naturally [rang bzhin gyis]. As he is utterly free from any defects, he has nothing to hide [sbas pa med pa]. The Buddha has no basis for making mistakes [nor ba'i rgyu med] since his activities of body, speech and mind are utterly perfect.

The way to offer ['bul ba'i tshul] all the various offerings listed in the root text is by creating them mentally [blo yis blangs nas]. The statement, "I offer them *in an excellent way*" [legs par] means with faith [dad pa] and respect [gus pa], with the purity of the three factors ['khor gsum rnam dag]. The 'purity of the three factors' means freedom from fixation on a subject who offers, an object offered to, and the act of offering.

There are four special distinctions [khyad par] concerning all offerings that do not have an owner: (1) The special distinction concerning the amount [grangs kyi khyad par] of these offerings is that one may offer all that exists within the reaches of space; the offerings are unlimited. (2) The special distinction concerning the faultlessness [kha na ma tho ba med pa'i khyad par] of these offerings is that they are not acquired through negativity such as killing, stealing and the like. (3) The special distinction concerning the presentation of [sbyor ba'i khyad par] these offerings is that they are 'created mentally' [blo yis blangs nas]. (4) The special distinction concerning the object [zhing gi khyad par] of offering is that all these are presented to the three jewels.

Text section 87 / stanza 6:

The three jewels are the *sacred recipients of gifts* [yon gnas dam pa]. In this context Khenpo Kunpal quotes from the 'Sūtra of Recollecting the Three Jewels' [dkon mchog gsum rjes su dran pa'i mdo]: "They are the perfect recipients of gifts" [yon yongs su sbyong ba chen po]. Not everyone is a perfect recipient of gifts, but the three jewels can receive any offerings and remain uncorrupted.

When presenting offerings, a pure motivation and mind are most important. Then, even if you present the Buddha with only a small offering, you will still receive a great benefit. Once a merchant [tshong dpon] called Udākarika offered seven peas [sran rdog bdun] to Buddha Vipaśyin [sangs rgyas rnam gzigs] and put them in his begging bowl. Later, he became the world monarch known as King Māndhāta [mi dbang nga las nu].[58]

On another occasion, a few children were playing when the Buddha walked by. The moment they saw the Buddha, one child thought, "I should offer some food to the Buddha." He placed a handful of sand on a stone and presented it to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted the offering, and allowed the child to throw a handful of sand in his begging bowl. Then he predicted that a hundred years after the Buddha's nirvāṇa, this child would become the dharma king Aśoka [chos rgyal mya ngan med].[59] This reveals the power of a pure motivation or intent when making offerings to the purest object, the Buddha.

Text sections 88-89 / stanza 7:

"My offerings are small as I am destitute of merit. But please accept these offerings for my own sake [bdag gi don slad du], so that I may generate bodhicitta in my mind, free all beings from suffering, and establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood. Please, buddhas and bodhisattvas, accept these offerings with the inconceivable and miraculous power of your body, speech and mind." Thus, by offering all the wonderful things that we can imagine to exist in the world, we can still make perfect offerings, even if we are poor and lack the perfect offering substances.

Merit is gathered through virtuous conduct, performing the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu], practicing the six transcendental perfections and so forth. The supreme way of gathering merit is presenting offerings.

We have the oppurtunity to easily gain great merit by presenting offerings to the Buddha. It does not matter that Buddha is no longer physically present in this world. His wisdom body is beyond time, beyond proximity and distance. If you present a mentally created offering to the Buddha with heartfelt devotion, as taught above, you will gain inconceivable merit.

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58 nga las nu [māndhāta], name of a king (fourth story of Kalpalatā), page 445. See *Heaven Tree* pages 19-22.

59 See *mdzangs blun*, pages 252-255.

The merit and benefit of having presented an offering to the Buddha in person two thousand five hundred years ago and presenting an offering nowadays to a stūpa containing his relics or remains is totally equal. Even if you simply visualize the Buddha and present offerings to him, the merit is equal to presenting it to him in person. Buddha's wisdom body pervades all time and space. He will at all times and at all places accept a heartfelt offering. The main point is to present the offering with sincere joy and devotion.

Because we did not present many offerings in former lifetimes we are destitute of merit in this life and might lack material wealth. Therefore, we have no choice other than to present offerings that do not belong to an owner. Present offerings with the thought, "In order that I may gather the two accumulations, purify the two obscurations and generate the precious bodhicitta in my mind, please accept with your great love and kindness this offering, which includes everything beautiful and worthy to offer that exists in this world."

When you gather the accumulations and purify the obscurations, realization of wisdom will dawn. Gathering the accumulation of merit gathers the causes for recognizing wisdom, which is the accumulation of wisdom. The accumulation of conceptual merit [dmigs bcas bsod nams kyi tshogs] belongs to the category of relative truth, while the accumulation of non-conceptual wisdom [dmigs med ye shes kyi tshogs] belongs to the category of absolute truth.

As we gather the accumulations of merit, we become more and more capable of pacifying all disharmonious situations. Our minds become relaxed, and a charismatic confidence [spobs pa] is born. When the mind has gained this charismatic confidence, recognition of the absolute truth, non-conceptual wisdom, becomes easy. As it is said:

> As far as the ultimate, the co-emergent wisdom, is concerned,
> Know that it is foolish to rely upon any methods other than
> Practices for gathering the accumulations and purifying obscurations,
> As well as the blessings of the glorious root guru.

> don dam lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes ni
> tshogs bsags sgrib pa dag pa'i lag rjes dang
> dpal ldan bla ma'i byin rlabs kho na las
> thabs gzhan brten pa rmongs par shes par bya

As you gather the two accumulations, the two obscurations are naturally purified. Clinging to a subject, holding on to a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin], is the root of the obscuration of afflictions [nyon mongs kyi sgrib pa]. Clinging to objects [chos kyi bdag 'dzin] is the root of the obscuration of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa]. Through the practice of presenting offerings that have an owner, you train in the antidote to clinging to a subject. Through the practice of presenting offerings that do not have an owner, you train in the antidote to clinging to an object. Presenting offerings cannot by

itself destroy subject-object clinging, but it does reduce clinging. Only non-conceptual wisdom can truly destroy subject-object clinging.

Text section 90 / stanza 8:

We are attached to what is close to us and are not attached to what is distant. Our body is very close to us and we therefore treasure it greatly. To cut through this attachment, we offer our present body and the bodies of all future lifetimes to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. We need not offer our bodies from past lives as they have turned into corpses and have already decomposed; we have no attachment to them. Beg the buddhas and bodhisattvas to accept the offering of your body. Beg them to accept you as their subject ['bangs], their servant [g.yog po].

Buddha is called the *Victor* [rgyal ba] because he is victorious over the four māras [bdud bzhi], the four evil ones, which are: the māra of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i bdud], the māra of the son of the gods [lha'i bu yi bdud], which means procrastination, the māra of death ['chi bdag gi bdud], and the māra of the skandhas [phung po'i bdud].

The 'sons of the Victor' [rgyas sras] are the great bodhisattvas such as the 'Three Lords of the Families' [rigs gsum mgon po]: Mañjuśri ['jam dpal dbyangs], Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug], and Vajrapāṇi [phyay na rdo rje].

The bodhisattvas are called 'heroic beings' [sems dpa'] because they are unafraid of remaining in saṃsāra to liberate all sentient beings from suffering. How does a bodhisattva achieve such courage [dpa'], heroism [dpa' bo] or charismatic certainty [spobs pa]? A bodhisattva achieves these qualities through the realization of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa], non-dual bodhicitta [gnyis su med pa byang chub sems]. As long as one clings to ego, that kind of courage cannot arise.

Text sections 91-92 / stanza 9:

Not only shall I become the servant of all buddhas and bodhisattvas, but I shall also become the servant of all sentient beings. To have the attitude, "I am the servant of all sentient beings," is a very noble thought. "Whatever work they give me or is needed, I will do it," is the attitude of the bodhisattvas. The perfect Buddha has only one function—to serve all beings. The true and heartfelt interest of a buddha is to help sentient beings. A buddha does not in fact need any servants because buddhas are the servants of all beings.

As bodhisattva trainees, we should try not to harm any being in the slightest and, in addition, we must try to help them whenever we can. A true bodhisattva would rather die than harm any being. This requires courage. That kind of attitude delights the buddhas. To delight the buddhas, you must become the servant of all beings. Even while still dwelling in saṃsāra, you will not shy away from helping beings, and you will not fear remaining in saṃsāra to serve them. All you think about is benefiting others in manifold ways. The task of a bodhisattva is to free all beings from suffering

and to establish them on the level of complete buddhahood. A bodhisattva is not afraid to remain in saṃsāra to accomplish that purpose.

Even as a beginner, do not be intimidated about promising to help and serve all beings. That thought and a sincere attitude lead to the gathering of merit. The mere thought, "I will liberate all sentient beings from the infinite suffering of saṃsāra and establish them on the level of complete enlightenment" carries inconceivable merit. Whether or not you can actually do this right now, is irrelevant; as a bodhisattva you need that thought. This mere thought brings with it the same merit as actually liberating all beings from the bonds of saṃsāra.

The Buddha himself has no function other than to serve and help beings. He opens up the minds of all beings, from miserable beings in the hell realms to tenth level bodhisattvas. The Buddha has no preferences at all, serving the greatest bodhisattva and the lowest being equally, without making any distinction. He has not the slightest bias toward tenth level bodhisattvas. However, since the Buddha teaches all beings according to their capacity, he teaches tenth level bodhisattvas differently from beings in the hell realms.

Offering one's body means promising to use your body in all future lifetimes as a vehicle to serve the Buddha. You promise to listen to whatever the Buddha teaches and to follow his teaching. You also understand what the Buddha really wants, which is to help all sentient beings, to further their happiness, to lessen their suffering and to establish them in the state of complete enlightenment. "This is what I promise to the Buddha. I will serve all sentient beings to the best of my abilities."

Furthermore, you promise to confess all your negative deeds [sdig pa], and you swear not to repeat them again. Having offered yourself to the Buddha and become his servant, if you continue to commit negative deeds [sdig pa] such as the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], you become an embarrassment to the Buddha. Therefore, "I confess and lay open all my previous misdeeds and promise to commit no further misdeeds in the future." Commit yourself to being an utterly good person. Make this promise and commitment to the Buddha personally. A practitioner who really commits to the Buddha like this, changing his character in body, speech and mind, is truly a special person.

Offering your body to the Buddha and becoming his subject, will grant you supreme protection [bsrung ba rnams kyi mchog]. This idea of offering one's body to the Buddha inspires fear or discomfort in many people. It is not easy. When you offer your body to the Buddha, you offer your mind and your speech as well. This is a very meritorious training for Mahāyāna practitioners, who should actually dedicate their body, speech and mind repeatedly to the service of all sentient beings as an offering to the Buddha.

Some beginning practitioners may find it difficult to give even ordinary items away much less consider offering their body, speech and mind. Challenged beginners should start by giving away something that lacks value or is of little value, and then gradually build the habit of giving.

In the tantric tradition, a practitioner serves buddhas and beings equally, since all are endowed with the buddha nature. The buddha nature of a completely enlightened buddha and the buddha nature of a tiny insect is in no way different. Serving the Buddha and all sentient beings in the same manner is based not on compassion [snying rje] but on knowledge [shes rab] and pure perception [dag snang]. This tantric attitude differs from the service attitude of the bodhisattvas, who serve sentient beings from compassion but not necessarily with pure perception.

The tantric view considers that all beings are primordially buddhas. Engrossed in negativity [sdig pa] and obscurations [sgrib pa], they have not yet realized their essence, the buddha nature. These negativities and obscurations do not, however, truly exist, but are mere delusions. Tantric practitioners thus perceive all sentient beings as buddhas and train in pure perception and devotion to all buddha-like beings. Such an attitude must first be understood in theory [go ba], then experienced [myong ba], and finally realized [rtogs pa]. This is the view of ultimate bodhicitta, not of relative bodhicitta. Offering of one's body to serve the buddhas and all beings is a characteristic of relative bodhicitta.

Text sections 94-96 / stanza 10:

In ancient India offering water for guests to wash hands and feet was considered a courtesy. To purify the stains [dri ma] and obscurations [sgrib pa] of their body, speech and mind, practitioners may extend this courtesy to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, offering a bathing ritual [khrus].

Visualize one or many bathing pavilions in the sky in front of you. Imagine that they are filled with sweet fragrances of sandalwood, camphor and so on. The foundations of the pavilions are composed of crystals in five colors, arranged like a great mosaic. These floors are unstained, even and perfectly flat [bstar legs pa].

Four pillars stand in the four directions of each bathing pavilion and each pavilion has a waist high wall to hold the water. Holes in the foor of the pavilions allow the water to drain, but at this point in the visualization they are stopped with plugs.

In the center of each pavilion is a platform. On top of it short pillars support a roof to shade the bathing buddhas from the sun. The roof is decorated with a wish-fulfilling jewel as the crowning pinnacle. Visualize various thrones and seats of precious materials around the sides of the pavilions. Then invite the Buddha, the perfectly enlightened one, and his entourage of bodhisattvas to enter.

Text sections 97-98 / stanza 11:

The Buddha is the Tathāgata, the 'one gone to (the natural state) as it is' [de bzhin gshegs pa]. As he himself has realized without any error the 'the natural state as it is' [chos nyid de bzhin nyid], he is able to help others realize the same view. 'Gone' [gshegs pa] connotes 'having arrived at'. A buddha is someone who has reached the highest

level of bliss, nirvāṇa, liberation, enlightenment or buddhahood. 'Gone' also connotes 'realization' [rtogs pa] and 'knowledge' [mkhyen pa].

After the Buddha and the bodhisattvas have arrived at the pavillions, they remove their monk robes, hang them over the railings, and are clothed in transparent white bathing garments. Visualize many offering goddesses pouring water from precious vases over the bodies of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. While the offering goddesses bathe the Buddha and the bodhisattvas, other offering goddesses entertain them. Some of the goddesses offer melodious songs of praise like the 'Short Praise of the Ten Deeds of the Buddha', which begins:

> At the time when the supreme one among humans was born,
> He took seven steps on this great earth
> And exclaimed, "In this world I am the supreme one."
> I pay respect to you, who were at this time already wise.
>
> gang tshe rkang gnyis gtso bo khyod bltams tshe /
> sa chen 'di la gom pa bdun bor nas /
> nga ni 'jig rten 'di na mchog ces gsungs /
> de tshe mkhas pa khyod la phyag 'tshal lo /

Some offering goddesses offer beautiful dances while others play musical instruments.

Text section 99:

After the Buddha and the bodhisattvas have bathed, the plugs are removed from the bathing pavilions, and a fine rain of divine bath water showers down on oneself and all sentient beings, purifying all negative deeds and obscurations. At the same time the evil and harmful intentions of the deities of the area [yul lha], the local deities [gzhi bdag], demons, ogres and ogresses, disease-causing demons [nad bdag] and so forth are pacified. All diseases of humans and animals are eradicated, and the precious bodhicitta is born in everyone's mind. These are the benefits of offering bathing to the Buddha and the bodhisattvas.

Text sections 100-102 / stanza 12

Having been bathed, the bodies of the buddhas and bodhisattvas must be dried with well-scented towels, made from the most precious and priceless materials such as the cloth of the gods [lha'i gos] or fine Benares silk [ras kā śi ka].[60]

Next, visualize that the towels transform into red light and dissolve into the space between the eyebrows of yourself and all sentient beings, granting blessings and

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60 Kāśi is the old name for Benares (Vārāṇasī). The Sanskrit term kāśika or kāśikā refers to valuable textile products from Benares.

accomplishments. Imagine that you and all beings have attained all the qualities and wisdom of these enlightened beings. That is the benefit of drying the bodies of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas.

Text sections 103-104 / stanza 13

Following this, you present the Buddha and the bodhisattvas with new sets of robes. To all the nirmāṇakāya manifestations, such as the Buddha, you offer blue, red and yellow ordination garments,[61] the three-fold robes [chos gos rnam gsum; skr. tri-cīvara][62] of monks and nuns. Of these, the first is the monk's 'lower robe' [mthang gos; skr. antarvāsa] that is stitched from many patches. The second is the yellow cloak stitched from only a few patches known as the 'upper robe' [chos gos / bla gos, skr. uttarāsaṅga]. This cloak is worn only when practicing the dharma. Fully ordained monks wear this on top of their shawls [gzan]. The third is the yellow cloak stitched from one hundred and twenty-five patches and is called the 'patched robe' [snam byar; skr. saṃghāṭi]. It is worn only by fully ordained monks. This particular cloak is worn on top of the former cloak only on special occasions.

A fully ordained monk must always have these three-fold robes with him, even if he does not wear them all. At least every morning before dawn when he awakes, and every evening before he goes to bed, he must put all three of them on his body and wear them for a few minutes. If he fails to do this, he has committed an infraction of his precepts.

When the monks celebrate the bi-monthly poṣadha ceremony [gso sbyong gi cho ga], they need to wear the two cloaks. Poṣadha [gso sbyong] literally means 'repairing and purifying' and is the principal ceremony for ordained Buddhist monks and nuns to purify any breakage of precepts and restore their purity of ordination. During this ceremony they recite the Prātimokṣa-sūtra, thus re-establishing their virtue [dge ba gso] and purifying their misdeeds [sdig pa sbyong]. At the beginning [sbyor ba] of the ceremony they wear the cloak stitched from many patches [chos gos]. During the main part [dngos gzhi], when the Prātimokṣa-sūtra is recited, they must wear the cloak stitched from a few patches [rnam sbyar].

Monks must dress properly. When lay people see a well-dressed and well-behaved monk, they feel inspired and devoted to the three jewels and thus gain merit. A well-dressed and well-behaved monk is always an encouragement and reminder for the laity to practice virtue. Conversely, a monk who dresses in showy manner and behaves strangely causes the laity to develop doubts about the saṃgha, and thus becomes a cause for people to accumulate demerit.

Buddha said that if someone pretends to be a ordained monk, wears the robes of an ordained monk, lives in a monastery and eats monastery food without having

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[61] See Ethics, pages 137

[62] See Ethics, pages 137-139

received any of the monks' vows, he commits a greater crime than if he had committed the ten non-virtuous actions for ten years. Therefore, only someone who has taken monk's precepts is allowed to use the thirteen possessions of (ordained) livelihood.

Monks at the time of the Buddha were all mendicants. Only during the rainy season did they stay in the gardens and monasteries that sponsors had donated for this purpose. Their personal property was reduced to the 'six basic possessions' [yo byad drug]: 1-3) the three-fold monk's robes [chos gos rnam gsum], 4) the begging bowl [lhung bzed], 5) a water filter [chu tshags] and 6) a mat (sitting blanket) [gding ba]. Monks at that time lived solely by begging alms and accumulated no personal property.

The vinaya, the code of precepts, allows monks to have three types of possessions [yo byad gsum]: 1) possessions necessary for livelihood ['tsho ba'i yo byad], 2) monastic possessions ['khor ba'i yo byad], and 3) additional possessions [lhag pa'i yo byad].

1) The 'possessions necessary for livelihood' refer to the thirteen garments monks need to maintain their bodies as well as to the abovementioned six basic possessions [yo byad drug]. According the vinaya the 'thirteen possessions necessary for livelihood' ['tsho ba'i yo byad bcu gsum] include: 1) the yellow cloak stitched from many sections called the 'patched robe' [rnam sbyar], 2) the yellow cloak stitched from a few sections known as the 'upper robe' [bla gos], 3) the monk's shirt stitched from many sections known as the 'lower robe' [mthang gos], 4) the under skirt [sham thabs], which is worn under the lower robes 5) the night under skirt [sham thabs kyi gzan], worn on top of the monk's petticoat, 6) the sweat cloth [rngul gzan], 7) the night sweat cloth [rngul gzan gyi gzan], 8) the bathing towel [gdon phyis], 9) gauze fro wounds [rnag gzan], 10) the flannel to relieve skin rash [g.yan dgab], 11) the sheet to collect hair when shaving [skra gzed], 12) the mat (sitting blanket) [gding ba], and 13) the rainy season cloak [dbyar gyi gos ras chen]. The monks regard these possessions for livelihood as personal property.[63]

In addition, monks can own a few minor possessions to sustain their livelihood ['tsho ba'i yo byad phren tshegs] such as: a hat [zhva], a belt [ske rags], shoes [lham] and shoelaces [lham sgrog], a knee cover used by meditators [spong ba bsam gtan pa'i pus 'khyud], a bag for their robes, and a box in which to store possessions [gtur ba ste chos gos kyi shubs sam yo byad rnams 'jug snod].

2) 'Monastic possessions' are the personal property of monks as well as the communal property of the saṃgha. The personal property of monks [sger gi 'khor] and the communal property of the saṃgha [dge 'dun spyi'i 'khor] are considered extremely sensitive and perilous.[64]

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[63] For further details see *Buddhist Ethics*, pages 137-139.

[64] This property is called 'black property' ['khor nag po] because the consequences of using it without authorization or misusing it are so dire. In particular, monastic property should never be used by the laity.

3) The 'additional possessions' are items such as shrine objects and so on that are needed only occasionally. The monks must treat all these additional possessions as communal property [thun mong gi yin pa / spyi'i 'khor]. Additional possessions also include items given to the monks by sponsors which the monks may not need. The monks must treat all such additional possessions as though they actually belonged to someone else [gzhan gyi yin pa].

One next offers the saṃbhogakāya manifestations, the bodhisattvas, the *five silk garments* [dar gyi chos gos lnga]: 1) the dance jacket [gar gyi phu dung] that has the power to ignite the bliss of meditation in the body; 2) the top [stod g.yogs] with golden design [gser gyi ngang ris can]; 3) the multi-colored leggings [tshi gu'i smad dkris]; 4) the tiara made of various kinds of silk [dar sna tshogs kyi cod pan]; and 5) ribbons [zi ldir]. A silk shawl [dpyang bgrang] can be substituted for the dance jacket.

The benefit of offering clothing to the Buddha and bodhisattvas is that one is thus endowed with a sense of *shame* in regard to oneself [rang ngo la ngo tsha] and a sense of *embarrassment* in front of others [gzhan ngo la khrel yod pa]. When a beginning bodhisattva has received the bodhisattva precepts from his teacher, he will develop a sense of personal *shame* that will prevent him from breaking his precepts. Remaining in contact with his teacher, the beginning bodhisattva will also develop a sense of *embarrassment* and scruples with regard to his behavior that will prevent him from breaking his precepts.

One next offers the *eight precious ornaments* [rin po che'i rgyan brgyad]: 1) the jewel crown [dbu rgyan] ornamented with clusters of beryl [skr. vaidurya] and other (stones); 2) the earrings [snyan rgyan]; 3) the throat ornament [mgul rgyan]; 4) the long necklace [do shal]; 5) the short necklace [se mo do]; 6) the bracelets [phyag gdub]; 7) the anklets [zhabs gdub]; and 8) the belt [ske rag].

The five silk garments and the eight precious ornaments combined are called 'the thirteen saṃbhogakāya ornaments' [longs spyod rdzogs pa'i rgyan bcu gsum]. Among the infinite bodhisattvas, the most important ones are the eight great bodhisattvas or the 'eight great close sons' [nye ba'i sras chen brgyad]: Mañjuśrī ['jam dbyangs], Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje], Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug], Kṣitigarbha [sa yi snying po], Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī [sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba], Ākāśagarbha [nam mkha'i snying po], Maitreya [byams pa] and Samantabhadra [kun tu bzang po]. The benefit of offering ornaments to the bodhisattvas is the attainment of the major marks and minor signs for oneself and all other sentient beings.

As described above you may offer bathing, drying and clothing to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the three times or just to Buddha Śākyamuni, the eight great bodhisattvas and the sixteen elders.

Text section 105:

The term *offerings of enjoyments* [nyer mchod] refers to things that one normally requires for rituals and daily use, such as incense, butter lamps and the like. Such offerings are

to be made on a vast scale, conventionally described in Buddhist literature in accordance with the vastness of Indian cosmology.

The *Abhidharma-koṣa-kārikā* describes this cosmology in the following way. One single world system consists of the central mountain, Mount Sumeru, four main continents and eight subcontinents, as well as the sun and the moon. Above Mount Sumeru begin the god realms, which extend up to the most subtle realms of the god Brahmā. Of the four main continents, ours is Jambudvīpa, the 'Rose Apple Continent', located to the south of Mount Sumeru.

The sum of 'a thousand single world systems' is called 'the first order of a thousand world systems' [stong dang po / stong dang po'i jig rten gyi khams / stong spyi phud kyi 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the lesser order of a thousand world systems' [stong chung ngu'i 'jig rten gyi khams], which means 1.000 to the power of one.

One thousand 'lesser order of a thousand world systems' constitute 'the middle order of a thousand world systems' [stong bar ma'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the second order of a thousand world systems' [stong gnyis pa; skr. dvi-sāhasra / stong gnyis pa'i jig rten gyi khams], which means a thousand to the power of two or one million separate world systems.

One thousand 'middle order of a thousand world systems' make 'the large order of a thousand world systems' [stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra], also called 'the third order, the larger order of one thousand world systems' [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ], which means a thousand to the power of three or one billion separate word systems—a trichiliocosm.[65]

Our cosmos of a 'third order of a thousand world systems' is called the 'world system of endurance' [mi mjed 'jig rten gyi khams, skr. sahalokadhātu] and is the sphere of influence and activities of one nirmāṇakāya buddha, in our case, Buddha Śākyamuni. Based on another explanation, the same term can also be translated as 'the fearless world system'. 'Fearless' [mi skrag pa'am zhed snang med pa] refers to the fact that in this cosmos of the 'third order of a thousand world systems', sentient beings are not afraid of afflictions [nyon mongs par mi skrag pa] as they do not fear the consequences of their actions. According to yet another explanation, the same term can be translated as the 'inseparable world system', since in this world sentient beings cannot separate from their karma and afflictions ['jig rten gyi khams 'di na sems can rnams kyi rgyud la las dang nyon mongs pa dbyed ba mjed du mi nus pa].

Text section 106 / stanza 14:

Concerning the 'offering of anointing' [byug pa 'bul ba], you visualize offering goddesses anointing the Buddha and the bodhisattvas with sweetly scented water

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65 For further details see *Buddhist Cosmology, Illuminator, Myriad Worlds*; and *Prince Jiṇ-Gim's Textbook.*

from precious vessels made of jewels and precious materials such as conch shell and the like. They anoint the bodies of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas so that the thirty major marks and the eighty minor signs of the buddhas shine like refined gold. They anoint and rub them with medicinal substances so that their bodies glow. Imagine that the fragrance of these substances permeates the whole the entirty of the 'thrid order of a thousand world systems'.

Text section 107 / stanza 15:

Next are offered beautiful flowers from the realms of the gods, nāgas and humans. These include the māndāravā flower, said to be enchanting and endowed with the most marvelous fragrance. One imagines tossing into the sky flowers which turn into beautiful houses, canopies, flags, banners, streamers, maṇḍalas and so forth. Imagine that a rain of flowers descends and is carried by the wind to the buddhas of the ten directions. Visualize beautiful garlands of sweet-smelling flowers. Offer all this to the Buddha and the bodhisattvas, imagining that heaps of flowers of the seven factors of enlightenment [byang chub kyi yan lag bdun] bloom in the minds of yourself and all sentient beings. These seven factors of enlightenment are:

1. The enlightened factor of correct mindfulness [dran pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
2. The enlightened factor of correct investigation of phenomena [chos rab du rnam par 'byed pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
3. The enlightened factor of correct effort [brtson 'grus yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
4. The enlightened factor of correct joy [dga' ba yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
5. The enlightened factor of correct pliancy [shin tu sbyangs pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
6. The enlightened factor of correct concentration [ting nge 'dzin yan dag byang chub kyi yan lag].
7. The enlightened factor of correct equanimity [btang snyoms yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].

Text section 108 / stanza 16:

The flower offering is followed by the offering of incense and fragrant substances such as white and red sandalwood and others, either natural or manufactured. Imagine that this wonderful scent pervades everywhere and is carried by the winds to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the ten directions. Visualize yourself and all sentient beings endowed with the scent of discipline.

Monks who have truly kept their vows throughout their lives, beginning from the time when they entered into the monastery as children, actually carry a special scent that pervades their surroundings. The Tibetans call this the 'odor of (monastic) discipline' [tshul khrims kyi dri ma] and it results from great purity. A monk with this

special odor has no thoughts of desire, even in dreams, since his mind is utterly free from desire [chags sems].

Text section 109 / stanza 16:

Next is offered food that has one hundred flavors which can be experienced simultaneously. You offer the *three white substances* [dkar gsum]: yogurt [zho], milk ['o ma] and butter [mar], as well as the *three sweet substances* [mngar gsum]: white rock sugar [shel ka ra], brown sugar [bu ram] and honey [sbrang rtsi]. The *divine* or *royal delicacies* [lha bshod] are offering tormas, which are like cakes. In making this offering, imagine that you and all beings have attained the nourishment of samādhi.

Text sections 110-112 / stanza 17

Next, imagine the whole world to be covered with heaps of lotuses arranged in rows that hold lamps of various precious substances. Imagine that each lamp, as large as the entirety of the 'third order of a thousand world systems',[66] is filled with a vast ocean of butter and holds a wick the size of Mount Sumeru. At the end make the aspiration that through this lamp offering the ignorance of all beings be dispelled and omniscient wisdom perception illuminate the minds of all.

Following this is the offering of flowers. Imagine the world as a pure and level floor, anointed with perfumes and scattered over with infinite beautiful flowers. Make the aspiration that all beings may be firm in their bodhicitta resolve.

Text sections 113-115 / stanza 18

Immense and beautiful palaces with hundreds of levels, inhabited by offering goddesses who present all kinds of offerings to the buddhas and bodhisattvas are offered next. Imagine the palaces as perfect mansions. Outside, in beautiful gardens, lovely water birds float on the ponds. The interior rooms contain everything one could need or desire such as the seven secondary precious things [nye ba'i rin po che sna bdun]: 1) a sword [ral khri], 2) a hide [pags la], 3) a noble pavilion [khang bzang], 4) garments [gos], 5) a garden [tshal], 6) a seat [mal sa], and 7) shoes [lham]. All these palaces are illuminated by precious lamps, whose light reaches into the infinity of space. Imagine all of space to be filled with palaces, palaces that float within space, illuminating everything. Make the aspiration that all sentient beings may reach the level of liberation.

Text section 116 / stanza 19

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[66] The 'third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum] means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems.

Offer beautiful parasols,[67] ornamented with pearls, their golden handles held by offering goddesses, horses and elephants, who carry them aloft. Imagine that all beings are relieved of the suffering of the three lower realms. The *magical horse* [rta cang shes], also called the 'precious and supreme horse' [rta mchog rin po che], has magical qualities. It can speak to humans; it can run around the world in one day, and so forth.

Text sections 117-119:

The aforementioned 'twelve mentally created offerings' [yid sprul gyi mchod pa'i rnam grangs bcu gnyis po] are subdivided into two sections, the offering of bathing and the offering of enjoyments. They are listed in stanzas ten through nineteen:

First, the offering of bathing:

1. The offering of bathing [sku khrus gsol ba]
2. The offering of drying [sku phyis]
3. The offering of garments [nam bza' 'bul ba]
4. The offering of ornaments [rgyan 'bul ba]

Second, the offering of enjoyments:

5. The offering of anointing with perfumes [dri mchog byug pa'i mchod pa]
6. The offering of flowers [me tog gi mchod pa]
7. The offering of incense [bdug spos kyi mchod pa]
8. The offering of food [zhal zas kyi mchod pa]
9. The offering of lamps [snang gsal gyi mchod pa]
10. The offering of level floors [sa gzhi star ba'i mchod pa]
11. The offering of noble and divine palaces [gzhal med khang bzang gi mchod pa]
12. The offering of parasols [gdugs kyi mchod pa]

If you cannot visualize offerings as vast as the entirety of the 'third order of a thousand world systems', simply visualize as much as you can think of. Śānitdeva was a yogin of simplicity who lacked physically assembled offerings. He taught how to gather the accumulation of merit without any hardship or material wealth. Therefore, this method is called the 'offering of the bodhisattvas skillful in means'.

Do not belittle these different kinds of offerings. Visualize them in brief moments again and again. You need not visualize them constantly as when you meditate on a deity. These repeated offerings will generate great benefit. Through them a

[67] See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, page 512-523.

practitioner can achieve all qualities, purify obscurations, gather the accumulations, remember what he has studied, give birth to bodhicitta in his mind and so on.

As you only imagine these offerings, other people cannot see them; thus, these imagined offerings can never be misused to serve arrogance and pretentiousness. Material offerings allow inferior people to flaunt their wealth and serve their own arrogance. Moreover, imagined offerings are never acquired through wrong livelihood or negative deeds, as material offerings sometimes are.

If you have the means and the time, set up the physical offerings on your shrine. However, if you are poor like Śāntideva, then offer according to your means. Do not neglect to make daily physical offerings on your shrine due to laziness.

Text section 120 / stanza 20

What follows are offerings made through the power of aspirations. Make the aspiration that the entirety of the 'third order of a thousand world systems'[68] may be filled with the pleasant and melodious sounds of musical instruments. These melodious sounds that you offer should be irresistibly beautiful.

One of the foremost students of Buddha Śākyamuni was the stern arhat, Mahākāśyapa ['od srung chen po]. Once he heard a spirit called Druma-kiṃnara [mi'am ci'i sdong po] playing the lute [sgra snyan / pi vang]. This spirit had the power to assume a human form. The sound of the spirit's lute was so unbearably beautiful that Mahākāśyapa could not resist dancing, although he had attained arhatship.[69] Equally beautiful is the sound of the tambura of the gandharva king Supriya [dri za'i rgyal po rab dga'].[70]

The sounds that you offer to the buddhas and bodhisattvas should be so beautiful that upon hearing them, the suffering of sentient beings is soothed. Beautiful music has the power to uplift your spirit when you are depressed. Music can make you inspired and happy. Likewise, you can offer any of the five sense pleasures as an aspiration so that they become offerings to the buddhas, serving to alleviate the suffering of beings.

"May these kinds of 'cloud banks of offerings' [mchod pa'i sprin phung], meaning multitudes of offerings, remain each individually distinct in front of the buddhas" [sangs rgyas rnams kyi sku mdun la so sor gnas par gyur cig]. Imagine beautiful offering goddesses playing various instruments and presenting these offerings to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. This is the first offering (made) through the power of aspirations. Make the aspiration that these musical sounds ascend to each of the buddhas continuously for aeons and aeons.

Text sections 121-125 / stanza 21:

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[68] One billion single world systems.

[69] See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 422.

[70] See *Heaven Tree*, pages 359-366; *rtogs brjod rtsa 'grel*, 339-344 and pages 608-610.

Make the aspiration that a continuous rain of gems [rin po che'i char] and flowers [me tog gi char] as well as a rain of offering substances [mchod rdzas kyi char] such as garments [gos], ornaments [rgyan], grains ['bru], medicinal substances [sman] and so forth may descend on all dharma books, stūpas and images of the Buddha. That is the second offering made through the power of aspiration.

You may also pray to take rebirth as a beautiful sandalwood tree in front of your root guru, with the beautiful scent of this tree pervading the whole world. Pray also that beautiful birds settle on this tree and delight your root guru with melodious songs. All aspirations made with a sincere heart and good motivation will eventually come true.

The Buddha is shown through three types of representations, the representations of his body, of his speech and of his mind. Statues are considered representations of Buddha's body [sku rten]; Buddhist scriptures are considered representations of his speech [gsung rten]; and stūpas are considered representations of his mind [thugs rten]. Among these, the representations of Buddha's mind are the earliest [ches lnga ba]. Buddha's father, King Śuddhodana [zas gtsang sras], built a stūpa to commemorate his son's birth in Lumbinī, close to Kapilavastu [ser skya, skr. kapila]. This was the very first representation of the Buddha.

The first drawing [ri mo la ches sna ba] of a Buddhist symbol was the 'wheel of life' [srid pa'i 'khor lo; skr. bhavacakra], a symbolic representation of the twelve links of interdependent origination [rten 'brel yan lag bcu gnyis] and the six classes of beings ['gro ba rigs drug].

The first painting of Buddha's body [sku gzugs la ches snga ba] is known as 'the painting taken from the water' [bris sku chu lon ma]. When the artists looked at the Buddha, they were filled with such blissful contentment that they were unable to reproduce Buddha's magnificence. Therefore, the Buddha sat beside a pool, and a picture was painted from his reflection. Thus, it is called 'the painting taken from the water'.

The first symbolic drawing and the first painting are said to have been made during the reigns of two kings, King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po] of Rājagṛha [rgyal po'i khab] and King Utrāyaṇa of Roruka [sgra sgrog]. Although these two kings lived far apart and had never met one another, they had a natural affinity for each other. It was their custom to exchange letters and gifts. Once King Utrāyaṇa sent King Bimbisāra a priceless jeweled coat of armor [nor bu'i khrab rin thang gzhal du med pa]. King Bimbisāra felt compelled to return the favor with an equally valuable present [skyes len].

The king's first minister, Varṣākāra [dbyar tshul], recommended having a picture of Buddha Śākyamuni painted and sent as a return gift. When the king requested permission from the Buddha, the Buddha agreed, advising King Bimbisāra that this picture should contain a representation of the Buddha and below it the wheel of life with a few lines of teachings. According to the Buddha's advice, the symbolic drawing of the wheel of life and the 'painting taken from the water' were both arranged on a single canvas and sent as a present to King Utrāyaṇa.

When he saw this picture, King Utrāyaṇa asked about the figure in the painting, the symbolic drawing, and the written piece of advice. From this he gained faith in the Buddha. Contemplating on the twelve links of interdependent origination, he clearly realized the truth [bden pa mthong ba], that is to say he understood the nature of the four noble truths. King Utrāyaṇa then invited the noble Kātyāyana and an entourage of five hundred monks to his kingdom and had five hundred temples built.[71]

According to Tibetan tradition, the first representations of Buddha's speech were two Buddhist scriptures, the Prajñāpāramitā and the Ārya-dhvaja-agrakeyūra-nāma-dhāraṇī. The Prajñāpāramitā [sher phyin], a teaching of the second promulgation,[72] was said to have been written with liquid blue beryl in a golden book by Śakra [brgya byin], the king of the gods. The Ārya-dhvaja-agrakeyūra-nāma-dhāraṇī ['phags pa rgyal mtshan gyi rtse mo'i dpung rgyan ces bya ba'i gzugs][73] was transcribed and placed in the top of a victory banner [rgyal mtshan].

Other accounts report that the first canvas painting was made at the request of the Singalese princess Muktālatā [mu tig 'khri shing].[74] The Buddha let rays from his body shine on a cloth, and an artist outlined his form. This painting became known as 'Taken from the Rays of the Muni's Body' [thub sku 'od zer ma] and was sent to princess Muktālatā. As soon as she saw the painting, she entered into deep meditation, realized the truth, and achieved the state of a 'stream-enterer' [rgyun du zhugs pa].

The stories of the first relief statues ['bur sku] of the Buddha are as follows: Buddha's great benefactor Anānthapiṇḍaka [mgon med zas sbyin] asked the Buddha for permission to make a statue since he felt that when the Buddha was not present during the monks' mid-day meal, the assembly lacked splendor. Buddha agreed, and Anānthapiṇḍaka commissioned many statues according to the specifications laid down by the Buddha himself.

Another account reports that when Buddha was visiting his mother for three months in the abode of the 'thirty-three gods',[75] the king of Kāśi [gsal ldan] wished to erect a

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71 See *Udrāyaṇa, König Von Roruka*; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 300-310; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 299-300.

72 The second promulgation, 'the dharma-wheel devoid of attributes' [bka' bar pa mtshan nyid med pa'i chos 'khor], during which the Buddha expounded the teachings of transcendent wisdom-knowledge [shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa].

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74 See *Heaven Tree*, pages 35-38; *rtogs brjod rtsa* 'grel, pages 44-49 and 452-454; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 411-416.

75 The thirty-three gods [lha sum cu rtsa gsum; skr. trayastriṃśa-deva] reside on top of Mount Sumeru and belong to the 'six classes of gods of the realm of desire' ['dod lha ris drug / 'dod lha rigs drug], which are: 1) the four goups of the great guardian kings [rgyal chen rigs bzhi; skr. caturmahārāja-kāyikā], 2) the thirty-three gods [sum cu rtsa gsum; skr. trayastriṃśa], 3) the gods free from conflict ['thab bral; skr. yāma], 4) the joyful gods [dga' ldan; skr. tuṣita], 5) the gods enjoying emanations ['phrul dga'; skr. nirmāṇarati] and 6) the gods with mastery over others' emanations [gzhan 'phrul dbang byed; skr. paranirmita-vaśavarttina].

statue as a devotional object in the Buddha's absence. The king requested Maudgalyāyana [maudgal gyi bu] to help. Maudgalyāyana, through his magical powers, transported the craftsmen who were to work on the statue to the celestial realms, where they received direct instructions from the Buddha in person. On their return to Kāśi they erected a life-size sandalwood statue which looked like the Buddha's body [tsandan gyi 'dra sku]. It is said that when Buddha returned from his visit to the celestial realms, the statue took six steps forward to greet him. Later this statue was taken to China, where it has since been known as the 'Sandalwood Lord of China' [rgya nag tsandan jo bo].

It is also reported that when the time for the Buddha to enter into nirvāṇa was drawing near, he ordered statues of himself in order to preserve his teaching for future generations and to tame those who followed other beliefs and paths, the tīrtikas [mu stegs]. He summoned the gods Brahma [tshangs pa], Viṣṇu [khyab 'jub] and Śakra [brgya byin]. Brahma had a stūpa erected as a dharmakāya representation of Buddha. Viṣṇu took various jewels from the nāgas and built a saṃbhogakāya representation of the Buddha called 'Great Glacial Ocean Vairocana' [rnam snang gangs chen mtsho], measuring eighty thousand leagues,[76] and placed the statue in the ocean. Śakra, the king of the gods, gathered precious substances from the god realms as well as from the human realm, and ordered the celestial artist, Viśvakarman [bi shva karma], to erect three nirmāṇakāya representations of the Buddha.

Following the description of Buddha's nursemaid [ma ma ngag bzhin], Viśvakarman's first and second statues portrayed Buddha at the ages of eight and twelve. The third statue depicted Buddha at twenty-five. Buddha himself blessed these statues. Śakra took the third statue to the celestial realms. The first two remained for some time in the realm of the gods, in Oḍḍiyāna, in the realms of the nāgas, and eventually at the vajra-seat [rdo rje gdan] in Bodhgayā.

During the reign of King Devapāla, the statue of the twelve-year-old Buddha was taken to China, and the statue of the eight-year-old Buddha was transported to Nepal.

The thirty-three gods are: (1-8) the eight wealth gods [nor lha brgyad; skr. vāsudeva] such as (???) 1) [chu lha], 2) [brten pa], 3) [zla ba], 4) ['dzin byed], 5) [rlung], 6) [me], 7) [nam langs] and 8) ['od byed]; (9-19) the eleven wrathful ones [drag po bcu gcig; skr. rūdra] such as 1) [ma skyes], 2) [rkang gcig 'phel], 3) ['jog po], 4) [drag po], 5) [brtson 'grus ldan], 6) ['phrog byed], 7) [bde 'byung], 8) [mig gsum], 9) [gzhan las rgyal ba], 10) [dbang ldan], 11) [sa gsum]; (20-31) the twelve suns [nyi ma bcu gnyis; skr. āditya] such as 1) [dbang po], 2) [byed pa po], 3) [lam pa], 4) [char 'bebs], 5) [bstod byed], 6) [sngon min], 7) [sngon 'phags], 8) [mi gzugs], 9) [khyab 'jug], 10) ['od can], 11) [chu bdag] and 12) [gshin rje]; and (32-33) the two sons of Aśvin [tha skar gyi bu gnyis] such as 1) [tha skar gyi lha] and 2) [gzhon nu'i lha].

[76] A league [skr. yojana, tib. dpag tshad] is an old Indian measurement. See *Myriad Worlds*, page 266, endnote 7. Twenty-four fingers [sor mo nyi shu rtsa bzhi] make up one cubit [khru gang], the length of the forearm, measured from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger. Four cubits [khru bzhi] are one fathom ['dom gang], measured from the right tip to the left tip of the middle fingers of the out-stretched arms. Five hundred fathoms are one ear-shot or calling distance [rgyang grags] and eight ear-shots are one league [dpag tshad]. See *Abhidharma-kosha*, page 288.

In the seventh century A.D. the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo (618-641),[77] took a Chinese consort [rgya bza'] and a Nepalese consort [bal bza']. The Nepalese consort brought with her the statue of the eight-year-old Buddha and had it placed in a speicially built temple called the 'Rasa Trül Nang Temple' [ra sa 'phrul snang gi gtsug lag khang]. This temple came to be known as the 'Jo Khang' [jo khang] of Lhasa, and the statue became renowned as the 'Jowo Mikyö Dorje' [jo bo mi bskyod rdo rje].

King Songtsen Gampo's Chinese consort brought with her the statue of the Buddha at the age of twelve. She built the Ramoche temple [rva mo che'i gtsug lag khang] for this statue. Later, due to political turbulence in Tibet, the location of the statues was reversed, and at present 'Jowo Mikyö Dorje', the Buddha at the age of eight, can be visted at the Ramoche Temple, while the statue of Buddha at the age of twelve is in the Jo Khang. This statue is now known as Jowo Rinpoche or as Jowo Śākyamuni [jo bo shākya mu ni]. All these statues are reputed to have been made during the Buddha's lifetime.

Tibetan legend has it that King Songtsen Gampo emanated as the monk Akarmatiśi and brought from India to Tibet the famous statue of Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs] called 'Jowo Rangjön Ngaden' [jo bo rang byon lnga ldan], also known as 'Jowo Rangjung Ngaden' [jo bo rang byung lnga ldan], as well as relics of 'the seven generations of buddhas' [sangs rgyas rabs bdun].[78]

Countless representation of the Buddha in the form of statues, scriptures and stūpas were created after his nirvāṇa. King Aśoka alone was said to have built, with the magical help of yakṣas, one billion stūpas in different locations, all containing 'relics grown from the bones' [sku gdung ring bsrel] of the Buddha.[79] These 'grown relics' look like tiny pearls and come in white, red, blue, green and yellow colors. They are believed to have appeared out of Buddha's remains, and from the ashes of his funeral pyre. When these 'grown relics' in turn give rise to even more relics, they are called 'multiplying relics' ['phel gdung].[80] Some sources report that King Aśoka erected 'only'

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77 According to the chapter on the 'Three Revisions of the Tibetan Language' in *The Thirty Verses,* "In the period from 750 A.D. to 1000 A.D., there is a variation in the dating of events among the most reliable of Tibetan sources by as much as 60 years." According to *Tibetan Empire*, page 227, the dates for srong btsan sgam po are 618-641.

78 See text section 44 of chapter one.

79 See *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnams thar*, page 268; *History of Buddhism*, page 93; *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, page 60-62.

80 A stūpa must contain the five kinds of relics [ring bsrel rnam lnga]: 1) the dharma relic [chos kyi ring bsrel], the dhāraṇīs written on the life-tree [srog shing] of the stūpa; 2) the dharmakāya relic [chos sku ring bsrel], the 'small terracotta stūpas' [tshva tshva] placed on top of the two maṇḍalas, which are the Vimaloṣṇīṣa [gtsug gtor dri med] and Vimalaprabhā ['od zer dri med], both of which are absolustely indispensable for a stūpa; 3) the mustard seed-like relic [yungs 'bru lta bu'i ring bsrel], the white relic pearls of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi ring bsrel]; 4) the bone relics [sku gdung gi ring bsrel], the actual bones of the Buddha that were taken from his funeral pyre. This relic can be substituted with bones of great lamas; and 5) the clothes relics

eighty-four thousand stūpas with the help of his magical army of yakṣas in the course of one day and one night.[81] Among all these stūpas, the most famous is the group of eight stūpas built in India and Nepal.

The Kaṃsadeśa-vyākaraṇa [li'i yul lung bstan pa][82] recognizes two sets of eight great stūpas: a) the 'eight great stūpas of the Tathāgata' [de bzhin gshegs pa'i mchod rten brgyad] and b) the 'eight great stūpas containing the relics that were divided into eight parts' [sku gdung cha brgyad du bgos pa'i mchod rten chen po brgyad]. The eight stūpas of the Tathāgatha commemorate eight great events of the Buddha's life and were constructed by his followers at the places where the events took place.

The eight great stūpas of the Buddha's relics were built after Buddha's relics were distributed among the eight claimants by a Brāhmaṇa called Droṇa [bram ze bre bo dang mnyam pa]:[83] 1) the first part of the relics was taken by the the Mallas[84] of Kuśinagara [sku gdung cha dang po rtsa can gyi gyed rnams]; 2) the second part of the relics was taken by the Mallas of Pāvā [cha gnyis pa sdig can gyi gyad rnams]; 3) the third part of the relics was taken by the royal class of Buluka [cha gsum pa rgyal rigs bu lu ka]; 4) the fourth part of the relics was taken by the King of the Koḍyas[85] of Roruka[86] [cha bzhi pa sgra sgrog kyi rgyal po kro taya]; 5) the fifth part of the relics was taken by the Brāhmaṇas of Viṣṇudvīpa[87] [cha lnga pa khyab 'jug gling gi bram ze]; 6) the sixth part of the relics was taken by the Śākyas [cha drug pa śākya rnams] of Kapilavastu; 7) the seventh part of the relics was taken by the Licchavis [cha bdun pa li tsha bi rnams] of

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[sku bal ring bsrel], which refer to any of Buddha's burned or unburned clothes. This relic can be substituted with clothes from great lamas who have passed away.

[81] The Aśokāvadāna records that Aśoka collected relics from seven of the eight stūpas that were erected directly after Buddha's parinirvāṇa and distributed the relics throughout India. Some sources report that Aśoka took the relics from beneath the stūpa in the city of Rājagṛha [rgya po'i khab] that contained King Ajātaśatru's share of Buddha's relics. With these relics he is said to have erected eight-four thousand essence-relics-stūpas [ring bsrel snying po can gyi mchod rten brgyad khri bzhi stong] with the magical help of yakṣas [gnod sbyin] that he controlled by mantra power. See *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnams thar*, pages 268-270.

[82] Peking No. 5699

[83] For a detailed describtion of Buddha's burial see *History of Buddhism*, page 57-68; *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnams thar*, pages 259-267.

[84] Malla [gyad] can also means 'strongman' or 'hero'[gyad; skr. Vikrama].

[85] The Koḍya (Pali Koliya) is the name of the neighboring clan of the Śākyas. Obermiller translates the term with 'the Krodhavas of Rāvaṇa' [sgra sgrog kyi rgyal po kro taya]. See *History of Buddhism*, pages 60-61.

[86] Some sources mention Rāmagrāma as the capital of the Koḍyas.

[87] Obermiller translates the term with 'the Brāhmaṇas of Viṣṇudvīpa' [khyab 'jug gling gi bram ze]. See *History of Buddhism*, page 61.

Vaiśālī; and 8) the eighth part of the relics was taken by Ajātaśatru [ma skyes dgra][88] of Magadha.[89]

Each of the eight claimants erected a stūpa in their respective cities or countries: 1) the Mallas erected a stūpa in Kuśinagara and 2) in Pāvā [sdig can], 3) the Bulakās erected a stūpa in the country of Calakalpā [rtog pa g.yo ba],[90] 4) the King of the Koḍyas erected a stūpa in Roruka,[91] 5) the fearless Bramins erected a stūpa in Viṣṇudvīpa, 6) the Śākyas erected a stūpa in Kapilavastu [ser skya'i gzhi], 7) the Licchavis erected a stūpa in Vaiśālī [yangs pa can], 8) and Ajātaśatru [ma skyes dgra] erected a stūpa in Veṇuvana ['od ma'i tshal], in the city of Rājagṛha [rgya po'i khab]. These stūpas became renowned as 'the eight stūpas containing the relics' [sku gdung gi mchod rten bgyad].[92]

The Brāhmaṇa called Droṇa [bram ze bre bo dang mnyam pa] received the urn [gdung sgrom] in which the relics had first been deposited and the Brāhmaṇas of the city of Nyagrodha (Pippalavatī) [nya gro dha'i bram ze] received the ashes of Buddha's body [gdung sol]. Each erected a stūpa. Thus, altogether ten stūpas with Buddha's relics were erected at that time.[93]

In general, one can say that a stūpa symbolizes the dharmakāya, the mind of the Buddha. A stūpa is an object of worship [mchod pa'i rten], an object of commemoration [rjes su dran pa'i rten], as well as a reliquary [sku gdung mchod rten] of the Buddha or his important followers.

The names of the eight great stūpas of the Tathāgata vary slightly in the different scriptures.[94] Following are the stories of these eight great stūpas:

(1) According to South Asian custom, a woman frequently returns to her natal home to give birth to her first child. Buddha's mother, Māyādevī [sgyu 'phrul lha mo], was in an advanced stage of pregnancy when she set out from Kapilavastu [ser skya, skr. kapila], the home of her husband, King Śuddhodana [zas gtsang sras], on her way to her mother's house. Her mother, Devadaha, was to help with her delivery. However, Māyādevī had left too late and about 25 kilometers to the east of Kapilavastu, at the little village of Lumbinī, she gave birth to the Buddha under a Sāla tree.

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88 See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 484-487.

89 See *Crystal Mirror Vol. 12*, pages 11-13.

90 See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, page 640: yul rtog pa g.yo ba na gnas pa'i rgyal rigs u lu ka.

91 Some sources mention that the stūpa was erected in Rāmagrāma. See *Der historische Buddha,* page 287. See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, page 640: yul sgra sgrogs kyi rgyal rigs raṇḍaka.

92 See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 487. The relics that the Licchavis brought to Vaiśālī have been excavated and are now on display in the Department of Archaeology and Museums in Patna, Bihar. Also the relics that the Śākyas brought to Kapilavastu have been excavated and can be seen in the Indian National Museum in Calcutta. See *Der historische Buddha,* page 288 and *Auf den Spuren des Buddha Gotama*, pages 147, 163, 165.

93 See *History of Buddhism*, pages 60-61.

94 See *Stūpa And Its Technology*, pages 10-17.

As soon as the Buddha was born, he took seven steps in each of the four cardinal directions. A lotus sprang up to cushion each step. To commemorate the miraculous event of his birth, Buddha's father, King Śuddhodana, sponsored the construction of a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Heaped Lotuses' [pad ma spungs pa'i mchod rten] in Lumbinī. This stūpa is also known as 'Stūpa that Gives Rise to Auspiciousness' [bkra shis 'byung ba'i mchod rten] as well as 'Stūpa of the Tathāgata' [bde gshegs mchod rten]. This stūpa commemorating Buddha's birth is considered to be the very first among all representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind.

(2) In the kingdom of Magadha, at Bodhgayā, on the sacred Vajrā Seat, [rdo rje gdan; skr. vajrāsana], Buddha attained enlightenment at the age of thirty-five. To commemorate this event, King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po] sponsored the construction of a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Taming the Māras' [bdud 'dul mchod rten], which is also known as 'Stūpa of Great Enlightenment' [byang chub chen po'i mchod rten] or 'Enlightenment Stūpa' [byang chub mchod rten].

(3) At the Deer Park of Ṛṣipatana [drang srong lhung ba ri dvags kyi nags tshal] in the district of Vārāṇasī, the Buddha set the wheel of dharma in motion,[95] teaching the four noble truths to his first five disciples, the excellent group of five [lnga sde bzang po].[96] To commemorate this event the five disciples sponsored the construction of a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Multiple Doors of Auspiciousness' [bkra shis sgo mang mchod rten], also known as 'Wisdom Stūpa' [ye shes mchod rten] or 'Dharmacakra Stūpa' [chos 'khor mchod rten].

(4) At Śrāvastī [mnyen yod] in Jetavana [rgyal byed kyi tshal],[97] Buddha performed great miracles [cho 'phrul chen po], defeating the six tīrtika teachers who expounded wrong views [log par smra ba'i mu stegs kyi ston pa drug].[98] To commemorate this event, the Licchavis erected in Jetavana a stūpa variously called 'Stūpa of Miracles' [cho 'phrul

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[95] In the first promulgation, called 'the dharma wheel of the four truths' [bka' dang po bden bzhi'i chos 'khor], the Buddha taught the 'four noble truths' ['phags pa'i bden pa bzhi]: the truth of suffering, its origin, the path and the cessation of suffering.

[96] The excellent group of five [lnga sde bzang po] are: 1) Ajñāta-kauṇḍinya [kun gzhi ko'u di na ya], 2) Aśvajit [rta thul], 3) Vāṣpa [rlang pa], 4) Mahānāma [ming chen], and Bhadrika [bzang ldan].

[97] Anāthapiṇḍada [mgon med zas sbyin] bought Jetavana, Jeta's Grove, in Śrāvastī from Prince Jeta, who was a son of King Prasenajid [gsal rgyal], for an exorbitant price. Anāthapiṇḍada built individual cells, a meeting hall and a dining hall and so forth and presented the entire place to the Buddha and the Saṃgha as a monastery. Buddha declared Anāthapiṇḍada to be the foremost patron of the Saṃgha.

[98] [mu stegs ston pa sde drug]: 1) (???) [rdzogs byed]; 2) Maskarī Gośaliputra [phyug lhas kyi bu ma ska ri], [gnag lhas kyi bu]; 3) (???) [rnam par smra ba'i bu mo'i bu kun nas rgyal ba], (???) [yang dag rgyal ba can]; 4) Ajita [skri'i la ba can mi pham pa], [mi pham skra'i la ba can]; 5) Kukuda Kātyāyana [kātya yana'i nog can], [ka ta'i bu nog can]; 6) (???) [gnyan gyi bu gcer bu], [gcer bu ba gnyen gyi bu]. Sañjayī Vairaḍīputra, Pūrṇa Kāśyapa, Nirgrantha Jñātiputra. (???)

mchod rten], 'Stūpa of Great Miracles' [cho'phrul chen po'i mchod rten] or 'Stūpa of Defeating the Tīrtikas' [mu stegs pham byed mchod rten].

(5) After Buddha had spent three months in summer retreat [dbyar gnas mdzad pa] in the god realm of the thirty-three [trayastriṃśa], where he had taught the dharma to his mother, Māyādevī [sgyu 'phrul lha mo], he ended the restrictions [dgag dbye mdzad pa] of the summer retreat in the morning and descended from the celestial realms to the human realm, arriving at Kāśi [gsal ldan] in Vaiśālī [yangs pa can]. To commemorate this event, the people of Kāśi constructed a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Descending from the Gods' [lha bab mchod rten / lha las babs pa'i mchod rten], also known as 'Stūpa of the Thirty-Three Gods' [sum cu rtsa gsum lha'i mchod rten].

(6) After Devadatta [lhas sbyin] had created a schism in the saṃgha at Rājagṛha [rgya po'i khab], Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana brought the saṃgha together again in reconciliation. To commemorate this event, the people from Maghadha, such as Prince Jeta [rgyal byed], erected in Veṇuvana ['od ma'i tshal][99] a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Reconciliation' [dbyen 'dum mchod rten]. It is also known as 'Stūpa of True Kindness' [byams dngos mchod rten] or 'Stūpa of Light Rays' ['od zer can mchod rten].

(7) At Vaiśālī [yangs pa can] Buddha extended his lifespan for three months. To commemorate this event, the people of Vaiśālī[100] constructed a stūpa called 'Stūpa of Complete Victory' [rnam rgyal mchod rten / rnam par rgyal ba'i mchod rten], also known as 'Stūpa of Blessing' [byin rlabs mchod rten].

(8) At Kuśinagara [rtsva mchog gi grong] the Buddha entered into parinirvāṇa. To commemorate this event the Mallas of Kuśinagara [rtsa can gyi gyed] constructed a stūpa called 'Parinirvāṇa Stūpa' [myang 'das mchod rten / mya ngan las 'das pa'i mchod rten].

Replicating these eight great stūpas of the Tathāgata, which commemorate events of Buddha's life, has become customary in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The stūpas can be built singly or as a set of eight. For example, H. H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche built the entire set at his monastery in Boudhanath, Nepal, and H. H. Penor Rinpoche has built two sets at his monastery at Bylakuppe, Mysore District, India.

Countless stūpas containing Buddha's hair and nails were built while he was still alive. After Buddha passed away, In addition to the 'eight great stūpas containing the relics that were divided into eight parts' [sku gdung cha brgyad du bgos pa'i mchod rten chen po brgyad], his followers also built 'stūpas which contained the remains of his burned clothes' [ras tshig pa'i mchod rten], 'stūpas which contained the remains of his unburned clothes' [ras ma tshig pa'i mchod rten], and 'stūpas which contained the charcoal' [sol ba'i mchod rten] of his funeral pyre.

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[99] This grove in Rājagṛha was donated by King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po] to the Buddha and the Saṃgha.

[100] Khenpo Kunpal states that the Mallas constructed this stūpa, while other sources mention the people of Vaiśālī.

Buddha's four incisor teeth [tshems mche ba bzhi po] were placed in four stūpas which are no longer in the human realm. One stūpa was taken by Brahmā [tshangs pa], another by the the king of the nāgas below the city of Ruroka (Rāvaṇa), a third by the king of Kalingka [ka ling ka], and the last by the gandharvas of the delightful city of Gāndhāra [tshig 'dzin yid 'ong].[101]

Text section 126 / stanza 21:

The teachings of Dzogchen, the Great Perfection, trace their origin back to the *three objects of the doctrine* [bstan pa'i btsas gsum]. Wherever these three objects dwell, the teachings of the Great Perfection spread. These three objects are believed to travel through space, from one world system to another, remaining only in those universes where sentient beings have sufficient merit and karma to receive the Dzogchen teachings. The scriptures mention twelve particular places where twelve Dzogchen teachers (???) abide.

The three objects of the doctrine in which the Dzogchen teachings have their source are:

1) The representation of the body is a self-arisen statue of Buddha Vajradhara,[102] made out of one hundred and one jewels, which presently abides in the realm of the thirty-three gods [skr. trayastriṃśa-deva].

2) The representation of the speech is the *Single Son of the Doctrine Tantra* [bstan pa bu gcig gi rgyud], also known as the 'Tantra of the Single Son of the Buddhas' [sangs rgyas sras gcig gi rgyud], which can presently be found in the cave called 'Wrathful Ṛṣi Cave' [rub tu khros pa drang srong phug] on the northern side of Mount Sumeru.

3) The representation of mind is a five-pronged vajra, one cubit tall, made out of one hundred and one jewels, which is said to be presently floating in the sky above Bodhgayā in India.

In the future, when the merit of sentient beings in our world system is exhausted, these three representations will fly to another world system. At that time, the Dzogchen teachings will no longer exist in this world. It is said that wherever these three representations reside, an inconceivable benefit for sentient beings will be spontaneously accomplished.

The Single Son of the Doctrine Tantra is considered capable of granting four types of liberation [grol ba bzhi ldan]: liberation by sight [mthong grol], liberation by hearing [thos grol], liberation by touch [reg grol] and liberation by recall [dran grol]. 'Liberation by sight' means to see or read the tantra; 'liberation by hearing' means to hear someone recite it; 'liberation by touch' means to wear this tantra on one's body; and 'liberation by recall' means to remember its qualities or to practice its teachings. Through seeing,

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101 See *History of Buddhism*, page 62.

102 Some texts mention a Vajrasattva statue.

hearing, touching or remembering this tantra, immeasurable negative karma will be gradually purified. These four liberations are a special feature of the Vajrayāna teachings.

Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra brought the *Single Son of the Doctrine Tantra* to Tibet, where it has been handed down from teacher to student within the oral tradition [bka' ma] as well as within the tradition of revealed treasures [gter ma]. Discovered as a revealed treasure by the Dzogchen masters, Chetsün Senge Wangchug [lce btsun seng ge dbang phyug] and Pema Ledrel Tsal [padma las 'brel rtsal], the great scholar Longchen Rabjam [klong chen rab 'byams] included this tantra in his Nyingthig Yabzhi [snying thig ya bzhi], a compendium of the Dzogchen teachings of Padmasambhava and Vimalamitra. Later, it was also discovered as a revealed treasure by the master Sangye Lingpa [sangs rgyas gling pa]. These different editions of the tantra may vary slightly in one or two words, but they are identical in meaning. The Nyingthig Yabzhi also contains a commentary on the *Single Son of the Doctrine Tantra* ascribed to the Indian Dzogchen master Śrī Siṃha.

Text section 127:

'Unexcelled offerings' refers to the vast offerings created by Bodhisattva Samantabhadra through the power of his samādhi. From his heart center Samantabhadra emanated infinite multi-colored light rays in all directions. On the tip of each ray he manifested himself, and each emanation again radiated immeasurable rays of light. Thus, he reproduced himself immeasurable times on the tips of infinite light rays. On the tips of the final light rays emanating from the heart centers of infinite Samantabhadras, he manifested offering goddesses who presented to the three jewels countless masses of offerings such as the eight outer offerings [phyi'i mchod pa], which are: 1) clean, sweet-tasting drinking water [skr. argham, tib. mchod yon], 2) pure and refreshing bath water [skr. padam, tib. zhabs bsil], 3) blooming flowers [skr. pushpe, tib. me tog], 4) fine smelling incense [skr. dhupe, tib. gdug spos], 5) illuminating lamps [skr. aloke, tib. mar me], 6) fragrant perfume [skr. gandhe, tib. dri chab], 7) food [skr. naividya, tib. zhal zas], and 8) music [skr. shapda, tib. rol mo].

Text sections 128-129 / stanza 22:

Just as Bodhisattva Samantabhadra had filled the entirety of space with unexcelled offerings, the other tenth level bodhisattvas, such as Mañjuśri and so forth, presented similar offerings to the Buddha. These offerings are called 'unexcelled offerings' or 'unsurpassable offerings' [bla na med pa'i mchod pa] because they cannot be duplicated in the human world. They excel or surpass anything that we know of. Even if we cannot actually emanate such inconceivable offerings, we should try to emulate [rjes mthun pa] these bodhisattvas so that we may slowly develop the same capacity.

Text section 130 / stanza 23:

Offer praises to the buddhas and bodhisattvas with poetic verses sung with a pleasant voice in various melodious tunes. Praise the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor signs on the body of the Buddha. Praise the sixty aspects of his speech and the infinite qualities of his mind. Furthermore, praise the infinite qualities of the bodhisattvas, which differ from level to level. On the first level, the bodhisattva is endowed with one hundred and twelve qualities. On the second, with twelve thousand qualities and so forth. In that way, the bodhisattvas are endowed with an ocean of qualities.

Text section 131 / stanza 24:

The main reason to offer prostrations or to pay respect [phyag 'tshal ba] is to diminish pride [nga rgyal]. Paying respect to others clears the eye [mig gtsang ma gso gi yod], enabling one to see the qualities in others and to acknowledge them by paying respect. An arrogant person is like a blind person, like someone with a cataract [ling tog]. He cannot see the qualities in others at all. Offering prostrations or paying respect eliminates arrogance from the mind, removing the cataract of pride and self-aggrandizement. Paying respect to the Buddha benefits the Buddha not at all, but is only for one's own benefit.

Arrogance prevents qualities from developing in our own minds. As text section 186 of the first chapter states, "The water of qualities will not stay upon the ball of arrogance." A mind filled with arrogance cannot hold the water of the sublime qualities of the dharma of statements and realization. A mind filled with pride and arrogance is not the proper vessel to receive teachings and practice the dharma. A mind filled with pride and arrogance is humbled through offering prostrations.

The object of respect is the three jewels, 1) the buddhas of the three times and the ten directions, 2) the dharma of statements [lung gi chos] and the dharma of realization [rtogs pa'i chos], and 3) 'the saṃgha, the supreme among gatherings' ['dus pa rnams kyi mchog dge 'dun].

The 'dharma of statements' [lung gi chos] refers to the tripiṭaka, the three baskets [sde snod gsum]. They are 1) the vinaya piṭaka, the basket of discipline ['dul ba'i sde snod], 2) the sūtra piṭaka, the basket of discourses [mdo sde'i sde snod], and 3) the abhidharma piṭaka, the basket of the doctrine [mngon pa'i sde snod]. The dharma of statements [lung gi chos] can also be divided into the twelve sections of scriptures [gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis]. The wisdom of statements is the 'wisdom that knows the statements of the three baskets' [lung sde snod gsum ha go ba'i ye shes]. The wisdom of these three baskets is within the mind of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas who hold the 'knowledge of having realized the entire teachings of the three baskets' [lung sde snod gsum rtogs pa'i shes rab].

The 'dharma of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos] refers to the 'three precious trainings' [bslab pa rin po che rnam pa gsum]: 1) the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], 2) the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and 3) the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. The wisdom of realization is the 'wisdom arising from the practice of

the three trainings' [rtogs pa bslab pa gsum nyams len byed pa'i ye shes]. All the buddhas and bodhisattvas have trained in discipline, samādhi and hold knowledge in their minds.

In short, one can say that the dharma of statements [lung] refers to the three baskets [sde snod gsum], while the dharma of realization [rtogs pa] refers to the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che gsum].

What is meant by the phrase 'the saṃgha, the supreme among gatherings'? The minds of the saṃgha members and the wisdom of egolessness that they have realized [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes] are inseparable. Generally, all compounded things ['dus byas] will eventually be dispersed. But the truth of the path [lam bden], the realization of egolessness, and the mind of the person who has realized it can never be separated.

The Sanskrit word 'saṃgha' does not refer to a supreme group of people, but to the inseparability of the realization of egolessness and the mind of the person who has realized it. All ordinary gatherings eventually fall apart, split or disperse, and are therefore not considered 'supreme gatherings'. But the realization of egolessness and the mind of the person who has realized it will never fall apart and this, therefore, is known as 'supreme among gatherings'. This is also a definition of the 'noble saṃgha' ['phags pa'i dge 'dun].

The 'supreme among gatherings' [tshogs rnams kyi mchog] means those who have reached the wisdom of the path of seeing [mthong lam gyi ye shes thob pa], the realizaion of egolessness, and are inseparable from it [de nyid bral ba med pa]. The supreme among gatherings is the gathering or unity of the person [gang zag] and the knowledge that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa shes rab].

The Hinayāna saṃgha consists of the śrāvakas [nyan thos], the two kinds of pratyekabuddhas [rang sangs rgyas rigs gnyis].[103] The Mahāyāna saṃgha refers to the bodhisattvas traversing the stages from the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] all the way to the tenth bhumi.

All those practitioners who have not realized egolessness but who abide by one of the seven sets of individual liberation [so thar rigs bdun] belong to the ordinary saṃgha or the 'saṃgha of ordinary beings' [so so skye bo'i dge 'dun].[104]

When you offer prostrations, imagine that your body multiplies as many times as there are atoms in the countless buddha fields. Offer prostrations simultaneously with all these bodies. That is what the phrase 'with bodies as numerous as all the atoms in the buddha fields' means.

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103 The pratyekabuddha who lives alone like a rhinoceros [bse ru lta bu'i rang sangs rgyas] and the pratyekabuddha who lives among people [tshogs na spyod pa'i rang sangs rgyas].

104 For a detailed discussion regarding the distinctions between the saṃgha of ordinary beings and the noble saṃgha see chapter one, text sections 222-223.

You may offer a full prostration [brkyangs phyag], throwing your entire body completely on the ground [lus thams cad sa la phab pa'i phyag]. Or you may offer a five-point prostration [yan lag lnga sa la phab pa'i phyag] by touching five points of your body [lus kyi mal lnga] to the ground. These five are your two knees [pus mo'i lha nga gnyis], the palms of both hands [lag mthil gnyis] and your forehead [dpral ba]. This prostration is also called a 'half prostration' or 'bending prostration' [bskums phyag]. The full prostration and the half prostration are both 'physical prostrations' [lus kyi phyag]. You may also imagine offering prostrations. That is called a 'mental prostration' [yid kyi phyag]. In any case, while you offer prostrations, in your mind generate devotion to the three jewels by recollecting their qualities, and with your voice recite the appropriate lines from the scriptures. In this way, the act of prostration purifies the obscurations of body, speech and mind.

The term 'offering prostrations' [phyag 'tshal ba] can be explained in two ways, as 'getting closer to the qualities of the object to which one offers prostrations' [yul nye bo gso gi yod red] and as 'meeting the qualities of the object to which one prostrates' [rang gi sems yul gyi yon tan la thug gi yod red].

Text sections 132 / stanza 25:

The root text mentions *the basis of bodhicitta* [byang chub sems kyi gzhi]. Base or basis here means 'support' [rten], a support base on which to can develop bodhicitta. The supporting basis for the development of bodhicitta includes all representations of Buddha's body, speech and mind: images, which represent Buddha's body; books, which represent Buddha's speech; and stūpas, which represent Buddha's mind. The support also includes temples [gtsug lag khang] and places important in the Buddha's life story such as his birthplace in Lumbinī, the place of his enlightenment in Bodhgayā, the site of his first teaching in Sarnath, and the location of his parinirvāṇa in Kuśinagara. Furthermore, any place where bodhicitta is generated [sems bskyed gling], explained, practiced or studied is a support for developing bodhicitta and is a worthy object of prostration. To all these one may offer prostrations and pay respect as they are also representations [tshab] of the Buddha.

Text section 133 / stanza 25:

Preceptor of prātimokṣa [so thar gyi mkhan po] refers to the person who gives precepts, from the precepts of the lay practitioner who accepts the three-fold refuge [skyabs gsum 'dzin pa'i dge bsnyen] to the precepts of a fully ordained monk [dge slong]. *Prātimokṣa* means 'individual liberation' and refers to the seven sets of precepts [so thar ris bdun]: the precepts for 1) fully ordained monks and 2) fully ordained nuns [dge slong pha ma gnyis], 3) monks and 4) nuns [dge tshul pha ma gnyis], 5) male lay practitioners and 6) female lay practitioners [dge bsnyen pha ma gnyis], and 7) probationary nuns [dge slob ma]. To all preceptors of prātimokṣa one pays respect.

You pay respect to all your teachers [slob dpon]. There are many types of teachers. These include: the karma ācārya [las kyi slob dpon], the 'the teacher to whom one

reveals secrets' [gsang ste ston pa'i slob dpon], the 'quarter master' [gnas sbyin pa'i slob dpon / gnas sbyin pa], 'the reading and writing teacher' [klog gi slob dpon] and so forth.[105]

When one receives the precepts of a monk [dge tshul gyi sdom pa] or the precepts of a fully ordained monk [dge slong gi sdom pa], the karma ācārya and the teacher to whom one reveals secrets are both needed. The karma ācārya functions as the preceptor during the ordination ceremony. The teacher to whom one reveals secrets asks the applicant prior to receiving his ordination many confidential questions such as whether he has committed any of the five crimes with immediate retribution [mtshams med pa lnga] and so forth. Based on the answers to these questions, the teacher can assess whether or not the applicant is allowed to receive monk ordination. The teacher must keep all this information secret and is not allowed to reveal it to others. The quarter master is necessary to see to the monks' housing.

All these teachers are virtuous friends [dge ba'i bshes gnyen] and worthy of respect. You pay respect to everyone who has taught you something. It is said that a student who fails to pay respect to all of his teachers, even one who taught only a single four-line stanza, will certainly take rebirth as a dog. Dogs are generally looked down upon and mistreated in Asia.

Students whose minds are filled with pride, jealousy or aggression do not respect their teachers, failing to give respect to those who deserve it. A student should pay respect to his teachers first of all because they are endowed with positive qualities, and secondly because they have extended kindness to the student by sharing their qualities with him. Therefore, paying respect is a way of acknowledging the qualities [yon tan] and kindness [bka' drin] of the teacher. Seeing the qualities in one's teacher, one pays respect out of devotion and faith [dad pa]. Seeing the kindness of one's teacher, one pays respect out of love [brtse ba]. Acknowledging and respecting the qualities in others leads to a happy and peaceful mind. A teacher's duty is to teach the student, and the student's duty is to respect his teachers.

When the Buddha was still on the path of a bodhisattva, he sometimes made offerings to demons and spirits because they were in possession of a few four-line stanzas of dharma. Thus, the Buddha, when still a bodhisattva, even acknowledged demons and spirits as his teachers, and paid them respect.

Moreover, one should pay respect to all followers of the Buddha and his teachings, from the most advanced practitioners of the tantric and monastic tradition to those who uphold only a mere token of the Buddha's dress code, from the most eminent down to the lowest of practitioners. The term 'discipline', 'practice', or 'tül-zhuk' [brtul zhugs], refers to someone who has abandoned ordinary, worldly conduct ['jig rten tha mal gyi spyod pa phar brtul] and adopted [zhugs] the conduct of tantrikas or of monks.

105 See Mipham Sungbum, vol. 26, page 241.

'Tül' [brtul] connotes 'abandoning' [phar yug pa] and 'destroying' [med pa byed pa]; 'zhuk' [zhugs] means 'adopting' [tshur dang du len].

Becoming a practitioner, someone who maintains the discipline of a monk or a tantrika, means a change in life-style as well as in dress. Tantrikas wear white robes [gos dkar] and do not cut their hair but wear it in long braids [lcang lo can]. Those who want to become monks give up their former life-style, shave their heads, and take on the three-fold saffron-colored robes. The saffron robes of a monk are a symbol of allegiance [khas len pa'i rtags]. A monk's outfit in itself shows that he is someone who has pledged to keep the precepts of a monk.

Those who enter into the conduct of a 'heruka' might give up any kind of dress and roam naked in charnel grounds. Their unconventional dress and behavior is a sign of utter fearlessness. Those who wear the attire of long-haired tantrikas, dressing in white robes, indicate through their dress that they practice pure perception [dag snang], do the practice of six yogas and so forth.

Text section 134:

When you offer prostrations, first stand straight, in the posture endowed with the *four-fold straightness* [drang po bzhi ldan]. When 1) the body is straight, the nadis (channels or meridians) are straight [lus drang na rtsa drang]. When 2) the nadis are straight, the prana is straight [rtsa drang na rlung drang]. And when 3) the prana is straight, (4) the mind is straight [rlung drang na sems drang].

Sometimes imagine that your body multiplies into infinite bodies, emanations of yourself, and offer prostrations simultaneously with all these emanated bodies. At other times, imagine your father to your right, your mother to your left, your enemies in front of you, and infinite sentient beings around you. Imagine offering prostrations with all of them.

Join your hands with fingertips, thumbs and wrists touching, leaving a space between your palms, and imagine that you hold a big jewel [nor bu] between them. Think that you offer this jewel to the buddhas when you do your prostrations. You can also imagine that the palms of your hands are joined like a lotus bud that is just starting to bloom. According to Chinese custom, pressing your palms tightly together, is a 'gesture of suffering' [mya ngan gi phyag].

Text sections 135-137:

You touch the wrists of your cupped palms to three places: first, to the top of your head, right at the crown [spyi gtsug], or to your forehead [dpral ba], second your throat center and third your heart center, right at your sternum. While making these gestures, remember the qualities of Buddha's body, speech and mind. Make the aspiration that the obscurations of body, speech and mind of all sentient beings and yourself may be purified and that all may achieve 1) the invisible ushnisha [gtsug tor ltar mi mngon pa] on the tops of their heads, 2) the three lines of the dharma conch [chos kyi dung] at their

throat centers, and 3) the infinite knot [dpal gyi be'u] at their heart centers. The infinite knot means that the mind of the Buddha is endless [mtha' med pa], inexhaustible [rdzogs rgyu med pa / zad mi shes pa], and cannot be fathomed by the intellect.

Text section 138:

The *four means of attraction* [bsdu ba'i dngos po bzhi ; skr. catuhsaṃgrhavastu] are four methods for attracting disciples: 1) 'generosity' [sbyin pa], 2) 'speaking in a pleasant manner' [snyan par smra ba], 3) 'purposeful activities' [don spyod pa], and 4) 'consistency between words and actions' [don mthun pa].[106] The term *worldly dharma* [byis pa'i chos] literally means 'child-like dharma', refering to the dharma of child-like, ordinary, worldly beings [byis pa so so'i skye bo 'jig rten pa'i chos]. Buddha called ordinary sentient beings 'children' because their minds have not ripened [sems ma smin pa].

Text section 139:

The *five obscurations* [sgrib pa lnga] are: 1) sensual desire ['dod pa la 'dun], 2) ill-will [gnod sems], 3) sloth and torpor [rmugs pa dang gnyid], 4) excitement and guilt [rgod pa dang 'gyod pa], and 5) doubt [the tshom]. Other teachings list them as: 1) attachment ['dod chags], 2) ignorance and sleep [rmugs pa and gnyid], 3) regret ['gyod pa], 4) distraction [g.yeng ba], and 5) doubt [the tshom].

The *five capacities* [dbang po lnga] are: 1) the capacity of faith [dad pa'i dbang po], 2) the capacity of diligence [brtson 'grus kyi dbang po], 3) the capacity of remembering [dran pa'i dbang po], 4) the capacity of meditation [ting nge 'dzin gyi dbang po], and 5) the capacity of knowledge [shes rab kyi dbang po].

The *five sense pleasures* ['dod pa'i yon tan lnga] are: 1) sight [gzugs], 2) sound [sgra], 3) smell [dri], 4) taste [ro], and 5) touch [reg bya].

The *five supernatural perceptions* [mngon par shes pa lnga] are: 1) the supernatural perception of magical powers [rdzu 'phrul gyi mgnon shes], 2) the supernatural perception of the divine eye [lha'i mig gi mgon shes], 3) the supernatural perception of the divine ear [lha'i rna ba'i mngon shes], 4) the supernatural perception of recalling former existences [sngon gnas rjes su dran gyi mngon shes], and 5) the supernatural perception of knowing the minds of other people [gzhan sems shes pa'i mngon shes].[107]

The *five eyes* [mig lnga / spyan lnga] are: 1) the physical eye [sha'i spyan], 2) the divine eye [lha'i spyan], 3) the eye of knowledge [shes rab kyi spyan], 4) the dharma eye [chos kyi spyan], and 5) the wisdom eye [ye shes kyi spyan].

The *five classes of beings* ['gro ba rgyud lnga / 'gro ba lnga] are: 1) hell beings [dmyal ba], 2) hungry ghosts [yi dvags], 3) animals [dud 'gro], 4) humans [mi], and 5) gods [lha]. Here the asuras are included with the gods.

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106 Mipham's *mkhas 'jug* page 271-272

107 For a detailed explanation see Mipham's *mkhas 'jug* page 270-271.

Prostration or *paying respect* [phyag 'tshal] is a 'gesture of respect' [gus pa] and a 'gesture of joy' [dga' ba] toward someone else expressed with body, speech and mind. The true prostration is made with the mind. Externally, you express this joyful mind [sems dga' ba] with a respectful physical gesture. Prostration is 'wishing to approach nearer' [nye bo bzo 'dod yod]. The essence [ngo bo] of prostration is 'intimate respect' [nye bar gus pa].

The etymology [nges tshig] of the Tibetan word 'chak-tsal-wa' [phyag 'tshal ba], 'prostration' or 'paying respect', is as follows. 'Chak' means 'hand' [lag pa], 'sign' [rtags], or 'gesture' [phyag rgya]; 'tsal-wa' means 'to do' or 'to make' [byed pa]. The word 'chak-tsal-wa' can be interpreted as 'to show a sign' or 'make a gesture' [rtags bstan]. For instance, one can make various gestures of respect with one's eyes [mig gis phyag 'tshal ba], gestures of close appreciation [nye bar gus pa'i rtags] or even heartfelt appreciation [snying nas dga' ba'i rtags]. Any kind of gesture, movement or sign expressed with the body in a respectful state of mind is called a prostration, a gesture of respect. You are expressing, on the external level, an internal, emotional experience of appreciation, joy and love.

Human beings have different ways of showing joy and respect according to their cultures. Some nod their heads in appreciation and acknowledgement; others bow or join their hands in anjali mudra, the joined palms, as a gesture of respect. In China and Japan monks show respect by raising one hand in front of their chests. All these gestures of respect [phyag 'tshal ba] are ways of expressing the wish to become closer with the other person. Arrogant or proud people do not show respect to others, since that would require humbling themselves. Showing respect through physical prostrations is thus an antidote to arrogance and pride [nga rgyal]. Offering prostration functions [byed las] to defeat arrogance [nga rgyal 'joms pa].

When you make prostrations you acknowledge [khas len] that the object of prostration has greater qualities than yourself. You open up to the qualities inherent in the object of prostration. If you want to acquire the qualities of the three jewels for yourself, the first step is to acknowledge and pay respect to them through prostrations. If the object is devoid of any quality then there is no need to offer prostration. To show respect to those who have no qualities is a sign of foolishness. On the other hand, arrogant or proud people who refuse to pay respect to the positive qualities of others cannot hope to attain such qualities for themselves.

The benefit [phan yon] of offering prostration is that one becomes a basis [rten] or foundation [gzhi] on which qualities can develop and increase. The mind of the person who offers prostration becomes open and stable, and, therefore, becomes a suitable vessel for the development of qualities.

There are distinct levels [dbye ba] of prostration, prostrations of the highest, middling and lowest levels. The highest level of prostration is the 'prostration of meeting the view' [rab lta ba mjal ba'i phyag]. Recognizing the view of the natural state to a certain extent already qualifies as a 'prostration'. Recognizing the view is called a 'wisdom prostration' [ye shes kyi phyag] or a 'knowledge prostration' [shes rab gyi phyag].

Generally, you offer prostration to the object of your faith and devotion: to the Buddha and your root guru. To truly understand the Buddha or the root guru means to realize the view. Once you have recognized the view, you automatically recognize your root guru as the Buddha. Recognizing the view means to open up [kha 'byed pa] one's mind and become close or intimate [nye bo] with the buddha nature. In the recognition of the buddha nature, one meets the Buddha. The supreme prostration is a total fusing of one's own mind with the mind of the root guru, the Buddha, and thus with buddha nature. Simply approaching buddha nature, even if only through theoretical understanding, qualifies as a 'prostration', a 'prostration of theoretical understanding' [go ba'i phyag]. On the path to buddhahood, complete enlightenment, one must traverse many lesser levels. The more one advances, the closer one gets to the genuine view.

To recognize the view means to recognize awareness. Recognizing the view is the highest form of prostration. You meet the mind of the Buddha. This is the 'prostration of ultimate truth' [don dam pa'i phyag], the 'prostration of the view'.

The middling level of prostration is the 'prostration of practicing meditation' [sgom pa bsgoms pa'i phyag]. Reflecting on the qualities of the Buddha, generating faith, devotion, certainty etc, are 'prostrations of relative truth' [kun rdzob gyi phyag]. The practitioner has gained confidence in the qualities of his root guru and the Buddha, bringing these qualities again and again to mind. He practices with mindfulness and does not forget the qualities of his guru. In doing so he brings himself ever closer [nye bo] to the guru and the view.

Mindfulness [dran pa] is indispensable for a practitioner. A beginner needs to maintain mindfulness with effort. As he advances in the view, he will slowly arrive at effortless mindfulness, awareness itself. The beginner must also practice introspection [shes bzhin]. He needs to know what to do and what to avoid. He further needs to scrutinize his body, speech and mind to determine whether he is following what he is supposed to do. That is called introspection.

The lowest form of prostration is the full body prostration called the 'prostration endowed with the three kinds of faith' [mos gus gsum ldan gyi phyag]. When you practice full prostrations, you are consciously assuming the lowest place possible. You cannot lower yourself more than stretching your body flat on the ground. While prostrating in this way, you recite the lines of refuge and recollect the qualities of the object of your prostration with a mind infused with faith and devotion.

Prostrations must be done in a joyous state of mind. Some people really dislike offering prostrations. If such people do prostrations intensively, their anger only increases. But they should still do a few in order to confront their aversion. Every practitioner should offer at least three prostrations every morning in front of their shrines before starting their meditation session. My teacher, Khenpo Pentse [mkhan po pad ma tshe dbang], continued to offer five hundred prostrations every day, even when he was an old man.

Offering prostration is a very powerful practice, a skillful means that helps deal with afflictions. It helps subdue physical diseases and gives relief when one is depressed. When you are livid with anger, a few prostrations can help you out of this state of mind. When you feel restless and think you must leave your meditation seat and go outside, just offer a few prostrations, and you will already have a different perspective. When you cannot sleep at night, get up and do a few prostrations.

Some people are overly concerned about bodily comfort, pampering their bodies too much. Such people should really do full prostrations to overcome their attachment to their bodies. The body is just a temporary dwelling and will be left behind when we die. From time to time you need to reduce your attachment to your body and throw it on the ground in full prostration.

Moreover, you need at some times to overcome the fixation on cleanliness and hygiene. At times, when you see a statue in a temple, do prostrations right where you first spot it, even if the place is dusty and dirty. Overcome all doubts and hesitations. However, you should never think that offering prostration is simply a good and healthy exercise. This is a worldly motivation and does not get you anywhere.

Although the body must regularly be fed and cared for, your mind and emotions actually require much more care and attention. Remember that pride and jealousy are hidden thoughts and emotions [khog 'gyur gi rnam rtog] and you never know to what extent they possess your mind. Anger, desire and ignorance are more easily detected. To overcome subtle and unnoticed pride and arrogance, therefore, practitioners should do a few prostrations every day.

The moment you notice pride or arrogance arising in your mind, strike these afflictions down through prostrations, like flattening and beating down something that comes up out of the ground. This is called 'flattening pride' [nga rgyal 'bur mnyam / ngal rgyal 'bur 'joms byed pa].

If you do not know Tibetan language and liturgy, just say, "Buddha Śākyamuni, please think of me," then prostrate to him with heartfelt devotion. Know that the Buddha is omniscient and that the moment you think of him or visualize him sitting in front of you, he is there in actuality. Know that for Buddha there is no near or far. The moment you recollect him, he is present. Know further that the Buddha has no likes and dislikes. Never think you are unworthy of his consideration. The love that Buddha feels for the bodhisattvas of the tenth level and the love he feels for a little insect are exactly the same.

When you feel devotion welling up in your heart, it is completely acceptable to compose your own devotional songs and chants. Call out to the Buddha any time you feel like it. When you are alone at home practicing or in retreat, you can talk straight to the Buddha's wisdom body. Call out to the Buddha, "Now! Please let me realize the essence of my mind. I need this right now. I will call out until you grant me realization." In this fashion supplicate the Buddha and offer prostrations in a state of intense longing. This is not about numbers of prostrations to be accomplished. It is about your certainty that the Buddha is present in front of you, the certainty that he

can grant you ultimate realization right now. Sometimes one prostration done with that kind of certainty is worth more than a hundred thousand done if your heart is not in it.

Supreme Dzogchen practitioners are those who are truly able to practice awareness recognition [rig pa rkyang 'ded] alone. Such practitioners are extremely rare. Most of us must apply various methods to tame or inspire our minds. But even for such supreme practitioners who can practice awareness alone, prostrations will only benefit and not harm. That kind of yogin will be an example for others. Even one who has recognized the view and is liberated from the expectation of enlightenment should always engage in gathering the two accumulations. For the benefit of others, practitioners who have reached a high level of realization and learning still maintain relative dharma practice. Although Paltrül Rinpoche had taught the Bodhicharyavatara over one hundred times, he continued to act as though he himself was still deepening his understanding of the text. In this way, he set an example for others.

The Buddha himself had reached complete enlightenment and yet he manifested a conduct attentive to many subtle details. Even his manner of eating rice was an example to others. This is why enlightened masters do not act out their realization of the ultimate view but rather set an example of proper practice and behavior on the relative level.

The Buddha meets the needs of each of his followers although they have different capacities for understanding the dharma. He appears to both the dull-minded and those of highest intelligence in appropriate ways. There is no single method, technique or teaching that will tame the minds of all people. The Vajrayana teachings are Buddha's private teachings. The teachings of the Great Perfection are his innermost secret teachings. With these various levels of teachings, Buddha taught every possible method to tame the minds of beings. Offering prostration is one method, one skillful practice among many, easy to learn and easy to do.

Text section 142:

Going for refuge is the doorway to all teachings [chos thams cad kyi sgo dbye]. What is the meaning [don dag] or the essence [ngo bo] of going for refuge? Going for refuge is essentially 'acceptance' [khas len], 'commitment' [dam bca' ba] and 'certainty' [thag chod pa]. It is the thought: "From today onwards, until the attainment of enlightenment (Mahāyāna) or until I die, (Hinayāna), I accept [khas len] the Buddha as the one who shows the path [lam bstan mkhan], I commit to him [dam bca' ba], and on this I am resolved [thag chod]."

If a student lacks acceptance [khas len], commitment [dam bca' ba] and resolve [thag chod pa] concerning the three jewels, the door to all teachings is closed. You cannot call yourself a Buddhist without having acceptance, commitment and resolve concerning the Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. Therefore, 'going for refuge' opens the door to all teachings and Buddhist practices.

A beginner needs to learn about the three jewels and their qualities. Without knowledge of the three jewels no one can go for refuge. The first step is to identify the three jewels, to be introduced to their qualities and to understand the reason [rgyu mtshan] for going for refuge. After understanding the qualities of the three jewels, the beginner can develop faith, the basis of refuge [skyabs 'gro ba'i rgyu].

Text section 143:

Going for refuge is the basis for all Buddhist precepts [sdom pa thams cad kyi gzhi rten]. Anyone can take precepts and vows. A precept [sdom pa] means that you bind or guard [bsdoms] your mind with a thought. The terms 'precept' and 'discipline' [tshul khrims] have the same meaning. Discipline means keeping rules that are in harmony with the way things really are [dngos po gnas tshul dang mthun pa'i khrims bsrung mkhan tshul khrims].

When you commit in your mind, "I will abstain from doing this and that," you have taken a precept. You can commit to many precepts, pledges and vows, but if you haven't first taken refuge, you are not maintaining any Buddhist precept, pledge or vow. Without knowing about the three jewels, you are ignorant about the dharma and have no idea about how or what kinds of precepts to take. The precepts of individual liberation [so thar], the trainings of the bodhisattvas [byang sems kyi bslab pa], and the samayas [dam tshig] of Vajrayana are all based on going for refuge.

All dharma practice begins with going for refuge. If you have truly gone for refuge this indicates that all of your doubts about the three jewels have been eradicated. Only when you have cut through doubts can you successfully practice the dharma. The practice of refuge also functions as a remedy for doubt [the tshom gyi gnyen po].

No precepts, from the *eight precepts observed for one day* [bsnyen gnas yan lag brgyad pa] to the *Secret Mantrayana precepts*, are ever given to a person who has not already gone for refuge.

The *eight precepts observed for one day* are: 1) not to kill [srog gcod pa]; 2) not to steal [ma byin par len]; 3) not to have sexual intercourse [mi tshangs par spyod pa]; 4) not to lie [rdzun du smra ba]; 5) not to take intoxicating beverages [myos par 'gyur pa'i chang]; 6) not to dance [gar], listen to or play songs [glu] or music [rol mo], and not to wear ornaments [rgyan], garlands [phreng ba] or perfumes [spos nyug]; 7) not to sleep on a high or large bed [khri stan che mtho]; and 8) not to eat after midday [dus ma yin pa'i kha zas]. Lay practitioners take these precepts on special days such as the new or full moon, or on special days that commemorate events in the life of the Buddha.

Text sections 144-145:

Going for refuge is the source of all qualities [yon tan thams cad kyi 'byung gnas]. Practicing any of the Hinayāna, Mahāyāna or Vajrayana teachings, without having received the refuge precepts, brings no benefit whatsoever. Just as you cannot build a house without a foundation, you cannot practice dharma without the foundation of refuge.

Having received the refuge precepts, however, all your practices will produce positive results.

If you have not resolved all your doubts about the qualities of Buddha, dharma and saṃgha, whatever teaching you might practice will be without great benefit. When you go for refuge you have to decide in your mind that you believe in karma, in the law of cause and effect. You decide that you believe in the enlightened Buddha as the supreme teacher. You decide that you believe in the dharma as the path that you personally want to follow, and you decide that you trust in Buddha's enlightened followers as your companions along the path. When you have resolved all your doubts about these basic beliefs, your dharma practice will be fruitful.

Once Milarepa was asked by his students whether he was an incarnation [sprul sku] of some great master. That question upset him greatly and he told his students they had wrong views about the dharma. Milarepa said that he had attained his qualities because he had faith in the law of cause and effect. That kind of faith is based on going for refuge since the very foundation of going for refuge is belief in the law of cause and effect.

Going for refuge in a genuine fashion gives rise to all temporary [gnas skabs kyi yon tan] and ultimate qualities [mthar thug gi yon tan]. Whoever takes refuge in the three jewels with pure acceptance, commitment and resolve will certainly be a good person in this life, and in his future life will attain one of the three higher realms [mtho ris gsum] of saṃsāra. Taking genuine refuge will result in prolonging one's life [tshe ring po] and reducing one's illnesses [nad med pa], and will lead to a blissful mind [sems bde po].

Someone who has really taken the refuge precepts to heart is naturally a person endowed with qualities [yon tan dang ldan pa'i mi]. As he has accepted and committed himself to the Buddha, the dharma and the saṃgha, he has promised to develop the qualities of knowledge [shes rab] and compassion [snying rje] that were already present in his mind. How do you distinguish between good and bad persons? The dividing line is whether the person has knowledge and compassion or not.

Going for refuge with knowledge and faith will give birth to immeasurable qualities: a peaceful mind, a blissful mind, a mind without suffering, increasing knowledge, increasing compassion and so on. The ultimate qualities eventually achieved through taking refuge are the qualities of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. If you study the 'dharma of statements' [lung], the three baskets [sde snod gsum], as well as the 'dharma of realization' [rtogs pa], the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che gsum], you will understand the infinite qualities of Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. The Buddha has infinite qualities of body, speech, and mind, the qualities of a mind at peace [sems zhi ba'i yon tan].

Text section 146:

Going for refuge marks the difference between Buddhists and non-Buddhists and causes you to enter into the ranks of the Buddhists [phyi dang nang gi khyad par byed 'byed pa dang sangs rgyas pa'i gral du tshud pa byed]. Buddhists are called 'insiders' and non-Buddhists

'outsiders'. Insiders, or Buddhists [nang pa], are those who are inside the dharma. To be inside the dharma means to be inside the unity of knowledge and compassion. The dividing line between a Buddhist and a non-Buddhist is having acceptance, commitment and resolve to the three jewels. Without these one is not a Buddhist. A Buddhist has the commitment to practice and develop knowledge and compassion. The short definition of dharma is 'knowledge and compassion'. That means a Buddhist is a practitioner of knowledge and compassion.

When you are asked, "Why do you call yourself a Buddhist?" then the answer is, "I am a Buddhist because I have accepted and committed myself to the three jewels." The distinction between Buddhist and non-Buddhist is not based on the belief in the existence or non-existince of a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag]. Were that the case many Buddhists would be classified as non-Buddhists.

Generally, one can distinguish 'four main śrāvaka schools' [nyan thos kyi rtsa ba'i sde bzhi],[108] which include the 'eighteen sub-schools of the śrāvakas' [nyan thos sde pa bco brgyad]. These four main schools are: 1) the seven sub-schools of the Sarvāstivādins [thams cad yod smra'i sde pa bdun],[109] 2) the five sub-schools of the Mahāsāṃghikas [dge 'dun phal chen sde pa lnga],[110] 3) the three sub-schools of the Sthaviras [gnas brtan sde pa gsum],[111] and 4) the three sub-schools of Saṃmitīyas [mang bkur sde pa gsum].[112]

One of these eighteen sub-schools called *Vātsīputrīya*, the followers of Vātsīputra [gnas ma bu pa'i sde pa], holds a view that believes in the existence of a personal identity. So do many Buddhist lay practitioners, who think, "I have an identity. I can feel my identity." Nonetheless, they believe in the three jewels. Therefore, the distinction

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108 1) Sarvāstivādins [thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde], 2) Mahāsāṃghikas [dge 'dun phal chen pa'i sde], 3) Sthaviras [gnas brtan pa'i sde], and 4) Saṃmitīyas [mang pos bkur ba'i sde]. The Sarvāstivādin school was associated with Sanskrit, the Mahāsāṃghika school was associated with Pāli, the Sthavira school was associated with Prākrit, and the Saṃmitīya school was associated with Aphabhraṃsa.

109 The seven sub-schools of the Sarvāstivādins [gzhi thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde pa bdun]: 1) Mūlasarvāstivādins [gzhi thams cad yod par smra ba'i sde pa], 2) Kāśyapīyas ['od srung gi sde pa], 3) Mahīśāsakas [sa ston pa'i sde pa], 4) Dharmaguptakas [chos srung gi sde pa], 5) Bahuśrutīyas [mang thos kyi sde pa], 6) Tāmraśāṭīyas [gos dmar ba'i sde pa], and 7) Vibhajyavādins [rnam par phye ste smra ba'i sde pa].

110 The five sub-schools of the Mahāsāṃghikas [dge 'dun phal chen sde pa lnga]: 1) Pūrvaśailikas [shar gyi ri bo la gnas pa'i sde], 2) Aparaśailikas [nub gyi ri bo la gnas pa'i sde], 3) Haimavatas [gangs rir gnas pa'i sde], 4) Lokottaravādins ['jig rten 'das par smra ba'i sde], and 5) Prajñāptivādins [btags par smra ba'i sde].

111 The three sub-schools of the Sthaviras [gnas brtan sde pa gsum]: 1) Mahāvihāravāsins [gtsug lag khang chen gnas pa'i sde], 2) Jetavanīyas [rgyal byed tshal gnas pa'i sde], and 3) Abhayagirivāsins ['jigs med ri gnas pa'i sde].

112 The three sub-schools Saṃmitīyas [mang pos bkur ba'i sde ba gsum] are: 1) Kaurukullakas [sa sgrog ri la gnas pa'i sde], 2) Avantakas [srung ba pa'i sde ba] and 3) Vātsīputrīyas [gnas ma bu'i sde pa]. See *Map of the Profound*, pages 209-218; *Blue Annals*, pages 27-33.

between Buddhist and non-Buddhist should be based solely on going for refuge to the three jewels.

Text section 147:

One Indian student of Lord Atiśa named Kṣitigarbha [sa'i snying po] had studied the canons of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings three times each but still could not settle on the Buddhist view, saying that he could not detect any difference between the systems. In his mind both systems and philosophies seemed to be almost the same. In actuality, there are many similarities in the words as the systems influenced each other with regard to meditation deities, yogic exercises [rtsa rlung], rituals, philosophical views and so forth. If you merely examine different systems or religions with the comparative attitude of a scholar, you can never decide which path to follow. Conviction comes only from going for refuge. Kshitigarbha got carried away by words and concepts and, therefore, could not decide on the three jewels as his refuge.

Lord Atiśa was so disappointed by this that he said, "Although the *six gatekeeper paṇḍitas* and others are still alive in India, my own teacher, Śintavani, has passed away. I will now go to Tibet since people in India cannot distinguish between a Buddhist and a non-Buddhist system." Since Atiśa thought that despite their great learning people in India did not understand that the distinction between a Buddhist and a non-Buddhist was solely based on going for refuge to the three jewels, in Tibet Atiśa taught only refuge. Tibetan scholars and students once complained, "Even when we request you to teach something else, you won't. From now on we're just going to call you *Paṇḍita of Refuge*, 'The Beginner's Paṇḍita.' Rather than feeling insulted, Atiśa was delighted and replied, "Now I am someone who furthers the teaching of the Buddha even through his nickname."

The title 'Paṇḍita of Refuge' was meant as a putdown, indicating that Atiśa was a lama who knew no other teaching but refuge. It was like calling this great scholar a teacher of ABCs'. Lord Atiśa took no offence in this at all but on the contrary was most delighted since every single teaching of the Buddha is included within taking refuge to the three jewels. He was happy that his nickname advertised him as a specialist in refuge and let other people understand that he was someone who furthered the Buddhist teaching.

The term *six gatekeeper paṇḍitas* [mkhas pa'i sgo drug] refers to a group of great scholars from the Buddhist universtiy of Vikramaśīla. According to Tāranātha's History of Buddhism,[113] Prajñākaramati was the keeper of the southern gate; according to the Blue Annals,[114] he was the keeper of the western gate.

Text section 148:

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113 See *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, page 295.

114 See *Blue Annals*, page 206.

Drigung Kyobpa said, "In short, all sublime teachings can be condensed into only refuge." That is a very profound point. All nine consecutive vehicles of Buddhism[115] can be condensed into the practice of refuge. All relative teachings are contained within the outer and the inner refuge. All absolute teachings are contained within the secret and the absolute refuge.

If a practitioner does not have acceptance, commitment and resolve regarding the three jewels, he will find that many Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings seem to be quite similar. He will be unable to decide on one path but will simply continue to compare teachings.

Fundamentally, all masters from all religions are in essence the same as all beings share the same buddha nature. As far as their individual paths are concerned, however, we find great differences. Different paths lead to different results. Although all beings share the same buddha nature, if a religious path does not develop the qualities inherent in that buddha nature, the fruition of that path will not be in accord with the buddha nature and thus will not lead to enlightenment. When people state that all religions lead to the same result, you should ask what they mean by such a statement. How are they same? Based on what comparable qualities are they same? Based on what do you decide that paths taught by Buddha, Jesus and Shiva lead to the same result?

People who hold this all-inclusive attitude are only speaking from a superficial viewpoint, not going into much depth. To really discern the crucial points of different religions and beliefs, one must examine the aspects of ground, path and fruition[116] as well as the aspects of view, meditation and conduct.[117]

The Buddha dharma is not a religion [chos lugs] and, although it manifests in a religious and cultural context, it does not depend on any culture. The dharma taught by the Buddha is nothing other than the way things naturally are [gnas lugs]. Therefore, one way of thinking considers that anyone with knowledge and compassion is a Buddhist, regardless of whether or not he follows the formal system of Buddhism.

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115 The nine consecutive vehicles [theg pa rim pa dgu] are the vehicles of the 1) śrāvakas [nyan thos kyi theg pa; skr. śrāvakayāna], 2) the pratyekabuddhas [rang rgyal gyi theg pa; skr. pratyekabuddhayāna] and 3) the bodhisattvas [byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa; skr. bodhisattvayāna]. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra belongs to the vehicles of the bodhisattvas. This first three vehicles are called the 'three common vehicles' [thun mong gi theg pa gsum]. The vehicles of 4) kriyatantra [bya ba'i rgyud kyi theg pa], 5) ubhayatantra [upa'i rgyud kyi theg pa], and 6) caryātantra [spyod pa'i rgyud kyi theg pa] are called 'the three extraordinary inner vehicles' [thun min nang gi theg pa gsum]. Most practices of Tārā belong to either kriyatantra or charyātantra. The vehicles of 7) mahāyoga [rnal 'byor chen po'i theg pa], 8) anuyoga [rjes su rnal 'byor gyi theg pa] and 9) atiyoga mahāsandhi [rdzogs pa chen po shin tu rnal 'byor gyi theg pa] are called 'the three extraordinary secret vehicles' [thun min gsang ba'i theg pa gsum].

116 gzhi lam 'bras bu gsum

117 lta sgom spyod gsum

However, the potential knowledge and compassion that individuals may have in their minds are not in themselves sufficient to bring about enlightenment. That potential needs to be discovered and developed. This is where the Buddhist tradition can help the individual. Although the sun radiates heat by its very nature, a magnifying glass is required to set a piece of paper on fire by using that heat. In the same way, the many techniques taught by the Buddha and great masters are needed so that the potential inherent in people's minds can be actualized.

Some people think, "I like Buddhism, I've read a few books and have some understanding. In fact, I'm already a Buddhist. I don't need a teacher." Such people have only very limited and unstable merit [bsod nams]. Although they might have a good connection to the three jewels from previous lifetimes, they still need to re-enter the path in this life in order to develop and progress. Simply calling oneself a Buddhist and reading books on Buddhism, without actually relying on the three jewels through taking refuge, is like mistaking a small pond for the ocean. There is much, much more to achieve.

A practitioner should have heartfelt confidence in and knowledge about the three jewels. He should be able to explain the qualities of Buddha, dharma and saṃgha to others when asked. He should be able to explain the meaning of taking refuge when asked.

Text section 150:

There are four kinds of faith [dad pa rnam pa bzhi]: 1) the faith of amazement [dang ba'i dad pa], 2) the faith of inspiration ['dod pa'i dad pa], 3) the faith of certainty [yid ches kyi dad pa], and 4) irreversible faith [phyir mi ldog pa'i dad pa]. The true basis [rgyu'am gzhi] of going for refuge is irreversible faith.

Faith of amazement [dang ba'i dad pa] arises due to a karmic connection from former lifetimes, through the merit [bsod nams] one accumulated in former lifetimes. This faith is a feeling [tshor ba] of naturally arising devotion—feeling drawn to the three jewels without having reflected on them. When hearing about Buddhism, people react very differently. Some start crying the first time they see a statue of the Buddha, hear the name 'Buddha', the word 'emptiness' or the names of great Buddhist masters. Other people start to cry after hearing just a few words from the teachings, although they do not understand the meaning of the words or why they feel so moved. An ancient Indian story recounted in Mipham Rinpoche's commentary to the Śākyamuni liturgy tells of a child who looked with total amazement [ha le ba] at a painting of the Buddha for three days.

Faith of amazement leads to interest in the teachings of the Buddha, and is a step toward the *faith of inspiration*, also called 'eager faith' or 'inspired faith' ['dod pa'i dad pa], when a person becomes eager, inspired and interested to learn more about the dharma. One wants to emulate the masters or the Buddha. Inspired faith is the thought, "I must practice the dharma."

Faith of certainty [yid ches pa'i dad pa] is the thought, "In this world my true place of trust, my real point of reference is the three jewels. I am totally committed to them and have resolved all doubts about them." For this faith to arise one must be either knowledgeable about the qualities of the three jewels, thus knowing the reason for one's faith and devotion, or one can be ignorant about the qualities but resolved in one's faith, like the old lady who prostrated to a dog's tooth believing it to be a relic of the Buddha. Her faith of certainty was such that relics truly appeared from the tooth.[118]

Some practitioners of the dharma generate faith from the very beginning, are committed to the teachings, and have utter confidence in their commitment [dam bca'] to their faith. That is a sign of contact with the dharma from previous lifetimes. Faith of certainty is more difficult to achieve than faith of amazement and faith of inspiration. Faith of certainty can be attained through study and practice, but can also be lost.

For an ordinary practitioner, these three types of faith might flare up when in the presence of the masters and later subside. The support of your dharma friends may be necessary to maintain inspiration and devotion. Requiring the support of others, these first three types of faith are unstable.

Irreversible faith [phyir mi ldog pa'i dad pa] on the other hand is unshakeable and can never be lost. Irreversible faith is stable certainty [nges shes brtan po] that does not rely on others. One has not the slightest doubt about the three jewels, and no one can create any doubt in one's mind. All doubts have been fully resolved [thag chod pa]. Irreversible faith means that the practitioner can withstand all kinds of obstacles [bar chad bzod thub pa] and cannot be tempted by any promises of saṃsāra. Through no circumstances will he lose faith and devotion to the three jewels. Gendün Chöphel once said in his 'third scattered poem' [thor bu gsum pa]:

> Fools do not follow me,
> And I do not follow fools.
> That is the foremost vow of the wise.
> Even when my life is at stake, I will endeavor to keep it.

> blun pos rang gi rjes su mi 'brang yang
> rang nyid blun po'i rjes su mi brang ba
> de ni khas pa'i dam tshig dang po ste
> srog la babs kyang 'bad pas srung bar bya

Irreversible faith is the true basis of going for refuge as it never can be lost. Such irreversible faith comes about only through genuine recognition of the view. With this stable certainty [nges shes brtan po], neither gods nor demons can obstruct one's practice.

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118 See *Word of My Perfect Teacher*, pages (???)

Even for a beginner who has not yet achieved irreversible faith refuge is still based utterly on faith [dad pa] and certainty [nges shes]. Without certainty in your commitment to the three jewels, regardless of how much knowledge you may have about Buddhism or how much practice you have done, you are not a true Buddhist. As Mipham Rinpoche said:

> If nobility of certainty is not born,
> How could you ever cut through negativity of misconceptions?
>
> nges shes bzang po ma skye na
> sgro skur ngan pa ga la gcod

Repeatedly going for refuge eradicates the habitual patterns of former lifetimes. In countless former lifetimes we have built up habitual patterns of doubt [the tshom] and afflictions [nyon mongs]. Taking refuge once does not eradicate these patterns. These patterns, which have a very strong hold on us, are only loosened when going for refuge becomes a dominant feature in our minds. Only when the habitual patterns of our minds change, is it possible to gain irreversible faith.

Text section 151:

One takes the three jewels as one's refuge, accepts [khas len] them and commits to them [dam bca' ba] in order to free oneself from suffering and fears. Were one truly free of all mental fear and physical suffering, one would have no reason to seek refuge or practice the dharma. But, realizing that we have fear and suffering, we go for refuge to the three jewels. Going for refuge means seeking protection.

The essence of refuge is acceptance, commitment and resolve toward the three jewels. One accepts the Buddha as the one who shows the path [lam bstan mkhan], commits to him and resolves all doubts about him. One accepts the dharma as the path that one wants to accomplish, commits to it, and resolves all doubts about it. One accepts the saṃgha to be one's companions along the path, commits to them, and resolves all doubts about them.

Going for refuge must not be confused with a supplication [gsol 'debs]. Having a problem and praying to the three jewels for protection is a supplication. A supplication is a prayer such as, "Please protect me, please grant me your blessings, please help me." Going for refuge is more than simply a supplication.

An aspiration [smon lam] is different from a supplication. Making an aspiration one wishes for something good or auspicious to happen [yong bar shog shig], as for example, "May all beings be happy." A supplication would be, "Grant all beings happiness." A supplication is like someone in trouble with the law who gives bribes [lkog nor] to an official, and makes the request, "Please help me so that I will not be punished."

Since going for refuge is acceptance [khas len], commitment [dam bca' ba] and decisiveness [thag chod pa] concerning the three jewels, one generates the thought, "From now on, whether I am happy or sad, in good times or bad, in all circumstances, whether I am up or down, whatever happens, I put all my hopes in the three jewels and in nothing or no one else." With this thought in mind one accepts the three jewels and commits to them.

Supplicating the three jewels will bring blessings and is important, but supplicating the three jewels is not the same as taking refuge. Refuge means accepting Buddha as your teacher, the dharma as your path and the saṃgha as your companions who help along the path. One commits to them, being certain about them. One thinks, "I will rely only on the three jewels."

Text section 152:

The third chapter of the Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo rgyan] teaches about refuge and also explains the term 'refuge' [skyabs su 'gro ba] as 'acceptance' [khas len] in the phrase: *Understand that because this (person) has the wish (to obtain in himself) the real (three jewels), also his acceptance (is born) out of compassion and love* ['di ni de dngos 'dod-pas khas len de yang snying brtse las rig bya].[119]

Text section 153:

Many distinctions are possible regarding going for refuge. One can classify going for refuge according to the *objects of refuge* [skyabs yul], distinguishing between outer, inner, secret and absolute refuge. Khenpo Kunpal here makes a distinction between *worldly refuge* ['jig rten pa'i skyabs 'gro] and *transcendental refuge* ['jig rten las 'das pa'i skyabs 'gro]. The transcendental refuges are the Hinayāna refuge and the Mahāyāna refuge.

Mahāyāna refuge is comprised of two sections: *temporary causal refuge* [gnas skabs rgyu'i skyabs 'gro] and *ultimate resultant refuge* [mthar thug 'bras bu'i skyabs 'gro]. All these various types of refuge must be distinguished according to the motivation [kun slong] with which one seeks it.

Text sections 154-155:

Worldly refuge is not a Buddhist refuge. People from certain cultures, based on fear, take as their refuge objects mountains, forests, trees, stones, non-Buddhist stūpas ['jig rten pa'i mchod rten] and so forth, thinking that a god [lha] or a spirit [gzhi bdag] resides at those locations. Frightened by demons and diseases, people seek refuge in spirits and gods that reside at various places. As these spirits dwell within saṃsāra and have not gone beyond suffering themselves, they are not an object of Buddhist refuge. They have no power to liberate people from suffering.

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119 For more details see text section 161.

People may seek refuge in Indra [brgya byin], Brahma [tshangs pa], Īśvara [dbang phyug], Viṣṇu [khyab 'jug] or among the gods of the eight classes [sde brgyad]. None of these gods and spirits are themselves liberated from the suffering of saṃsāra; they cannot, therefore, grant refuge from saṃsāra. Whether these gods and spirits have the power to protect people from temporary troubles, such as diseases and fears, or to grant minor wishes, is also uncertain. None of these objects of worldly refuge are considered to be supreme. In these cases, both the object of refuge and the motivation of the people going for refuge is worldly. This does not constitute Buddhist refuge.

If one goes for refuge to the three jewels with worldly thoughts and motivation, then one is using the three jewels as a worldly refuge. A worldly motivation is the wish to attain wealth, longevity, health, beauty, a happy marriage and the like in this life and the next. If that is one's motivation for taking refuge in the three jewels, although one might be a Buddhist, one's refuge is the lowest kind of Buddhist refuge as the motivation is worldly.

Four ways of going for refuge can be distinguished: 1) going for refuge to a worldly refuge object with a worldly motivation; 2) going for refuge to a Buddhist refuge object with a worldly motivation; 3) going for refuge to a worldly refuge object with a Buddhist motivation; and 4) going for refuge to a Buddhist refuge object with a Buddhist motivation.

The first is not a Buddhist refuge at all. The second and third can be considered lesser varieties of Buddhist refuge, while the fourth is the actual Buddhist refuge. If the object of refuge is the three jewels, if the person who goes for refuge has accepted and committed himself to them, and if the motivation of going for refuge is either a Hinayāna or Mahāyāna motivation, then that is a proper Buddhist refuge.

Text section 156:

In the Hinayāna tradition, Buddha Śākyamuni is called *the supreme among humans* [rkang gnyis rnams kyi mchog] and is considered to be the supreme nirmāṇakāya [mchog gi sprul sku]. The Buddha's mind is the dharmakāya [chos sku] and his body the rūpakāya [gzugs sku]. These two kayas constitute the Buddha. The rūpakāya includes the saṃbhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya.

In the Hinayāna tradition, dharma is called *the sublime dharma, peaceful and supreme, free from craving* [zhi ba 'dod chags dang bral ba rnams kyi mchog dam pa'i chos]. The dharma here describes the mind of an arhat. 'Peaceful' refers to his peaceful mind. 'Free from craving' means that his mind is free from all afflictions such as desire ['dod chags], anger [zhe sdang], ignorance [gti mug], pride [nga rgyal] and jealousy [phrag dog]. An arhat is free from the obscuration of afflictions but not free from the obscuration of cognition. He still is not totally free from fixations ['dzin pa med pa]. The arhat has realized that there is no truly existing 'self' [nga], but he still holds the view that phenomena have a real basis in indivisible particles [rdul phran cha med bden 'dzin pa] and moments of consciousness [nang shes skad cig cha med bden 'dzin pa], which he holds to be truly existent. His view, his realization, his thoughts, and his insight are the

dharma in the Hinayāna refuge. The realizations abiding in the mind of an arhat constitute the dharma in the Hinayāna system. The dharma is not an external entity.

The dharma is *nirvāṇa* [myang 'das] or *cessation* ['gog pa], the *overcoming* [spang bya] of all that should be overcome, namely all afflictions together with their seeds [sa bon]. Afflictions are the five mind poisons: 1) craving ['dod chags], 2) aggression [zhe sdang], 3) ignorance [gti mug], 4) pride [nga rgyal], and 5) jealousy [phrag dog]. The seeds or causes for all afflictions are the clinging to an 'I' [bdag du 'dzin pa]. Once the five afflictions are overcome, one has reached nirvāṇa or cessation. Nirvāṇa means having transcended all suffering, its causes and fruition. Cessation means that clinging to an ego [bdag du 'dzin pa] has ceased and, therefore, that afflictions have come to an end. Realization in which ego-clinging and afflictions are absent is called the dharma. The mind of any person who is free of ego-clinging and afflictions can be called 'dharma'. Likewise, a mind in which suffering and the origination of suffering have ceased is called dharma.

In the Hinayāna tradition, the saṃgha is called the *supreme among gatherings* [tshogs rnams kyi mchog]. 'Gathering' [tshogs] means 'to gather many' [mang po 'dus pa]. Sometimes the saṃgha is called 'the precious group of gatherings' ['dus sde rin po che]. It does not refer to the gathering of a group of people, but to the realization [rtogs pa] that was previously absent from someone's mind but has now been newly gathered [gsar du 'dus pa'i rtogs pa].

What is newly gathered is the knowledge that realizes egolessness, the absence of a personal identity [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], the truth of the path [lam bden]. That realization and the mind of the person who holds it cannot be separated. The person and the realization are not one because the realization of egolessness is newly acquired. This is a dualistic concept ['du shes]. Once this realization is born in the practitioner's mind, however, it cannot be separated from him. Yet, the person and his realization of egolessness are two [tha dad], not one [gcig ma red]. The inseparability of the realization and the mind of the realizer is called 'the supreme among all gatherings'. That is the saṃgha.

Though the Sanskrit word saṃgha actually means 'gathering', the Tibetan term translates as 'those who aspire to virtue or goodness' [dge 'dun]. Monks do nothing other than aspire to goodness, train in goodness [dge ba la 'jug pa], and act in virtuous ways. They have entered into virtue [dge ba la 'jug]; they aspires to virtue; and they transform themselves into virtue [dge ba la 'gyur]. A monk who has become an arhat has no thoughts other than virtuous thoughts.

Again, the Sanskrit word 'saṃgha' does not refer to the supreme group of people. All ordinary gatherings eventually fall apart, split or disperse. Therefore, they cannot be considered 'supreme gatherings'. The realization of egolessness and the mind of the person who has realized it, however, do not fall apart, and, therefore, this kind of gathering is called the *supreme among gatherings*.

In the Hinayāna tradition, all three—Buddha, dharma and saṃgha—refer to the mind. One does not go for refuge to the Buddha's body in the Hinayāna tradition.

The Hinayāna tradition recognizes four levels of realization. The first three are the 'stream-enterer' [rgyun zhugs], the 'once-returner' [phyir 'ong ba] and the 'non-returner' [phyir mi 'ong ba]. Among the five paths they are still on the path of learning [slob lam]. The fourth is the arhat, the 'one who has destroyed his adversary' [dgra bcom pa].

An ordinary person [so so skye bo] is a 'person who has not reached the path of the noble ones' ['phags lam ma thob pa'i gang zag]. In the Hinayāna tradition [theg dman gyi mthong lam thob pa], a practitioner who has attained the 'path of seeing' has become a 'stream-enterer', and is then called 'a noble one' ['phags pa]. In the Mahāyāna tradition, the path of seeing is identical with attaining the first bodhisattva level. From the first level onward bodhisattvas are called 'noble beings'.

The term 'noble saṃgha' ['phags pa'i dge 'dun] refers to any person who has attained the higher realizations from the level of a stream-enterer onward. Those monks who have received ordination but have not yet reached any of these higher realizations are called 'the saṃgha of the ordinary beings' [so so skye bo'i dge 'dun]. Both the noble saṃgha and the ordinary saṃgha are considered to be a 'field of qualities' [yon tan gyi zhing] and 'a field or merit' [bsod nams kyi zhing]. They are worthy of prostrations and offerings. A minimum of four monks constitutes an ordinary saṃgha.

There is a great difference between the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna levels of attainment. A Hinayāna practitioner never aspires to the enlightenment of the Buddha but only to become an arhat. Hinayāna practitioners believe that becoming an arhat is the highest attainment possible. From the Mahāyāna perspective, although an arhat can remain in a state of cessation for aeons, eventually he will be struck by a beam of light emitted from a buddha and will awaken from his state of cessation in order to progress along the bodhisattva path, beginning from the path of accumulations.

Text section 157:

Hinayāna practitioners go for refuge to the three jewels with the motivation of liberating themselves from the fears and suffering of saṃsāra. They want to be free from ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin], recognizing that saṃsāra comes about through ego-clinging. Without ego-clinging there is no saṃsāra. The Buddha taught how to examine our situation so we can understand that the ego does not exist in actuality, and the belief in the existence of the ego is as absurd as believing in the horns of a rabbit.

Hinayāna practitioners take refuge to the three jewels for as long as they are alive or until they have reached the goal of their path, which is to become an arhat. Unlike the bodhisattva practitioners, they do not aspire to become buddhas. They think the attainment of complete enlightenment is virtually impossible, because it takes too many aeons of practice to become a buddha. They believe that becoming an arhat and leaving the load of saṃsāra behind is much easier. Therefore, the Hinayāna tradition teaches only how to become an arhat and not how to become a completely enlightened Buddha.

Text section 158:

In Mahāyāna refuge, the practitioner develops a strong and unbearable compassion toward all sentient beings, who are as many in number as space is vast. 'Unbearable' [shas mi bzod pa] means 'unbearable in the flesh', like being pierced by a thorn. A Mahāyāna practitioner does not limit himself to only feeling compassion, but cultivates the thought, "I need to liberate all beings from all types of suffering."

Without being liberated oneself, one cannot possibly lead beings to complete enlightenment. In order to liberate oneself and all beings from the fears and suffering of saṃsāric existence and peaceful nirvāṇa, one goes for refuge to the three jewels of Mahāyāna until attaining the essence of enlightenment [byang chub snying po]. The expression 'essence of enlightenment' refers to the attainment of the three kayas, dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya.

Text section 160:

The phrase, the *fears of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa* [srid zhi'i 'jigs pa] refers to the two extremes: the three realms of saṃsāra and peaceful nirvāṇa [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba dang zhi ba mya ngan las 'das pa'i mtha']. What kind of fear exists in peaceful nirvāṇa? Even though the arhat is free from ego-clinging [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin], subject fixation, and has attained the peace of nirvāṇa, he still retains subtle fixations on phenomena [chos kyi bdag 'dzin], object fixations, which cause subtle fear and suffering. Bodhisattvas also have this subtle fixation. Therefore, the Mahāyāna practitioner aspires to free all beings from even the most subtle fixations. *Existence* [srid pa] refers to the 'three realms of saṃsāra' [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba], and *peace* [zhi ba] refers to 'peaceful nirvāṇa' [zhi ba mya ngan las 'das pa].

The three jewels which *have manifested in the minds of others* [gzhan rgyud la byon zin pa] refers to the external three jewels [phyi rol gyi dkon mchog gsum], which have appeared in the perception of others [gzhan sems can rgyud la phebs tshar ba]. The Buddha, dharma and saṃgha have manifested in this world and are still externally present. In Hinayāna the three jewels are regarded as something that exists outside the individual, whereas in Mahāyāna the three jewels exist internally, within the mind of the individual.

The 'causal refuge' [rgyu skyabs] entails acknowledging the three jewels as something existing outside of oneself. One considers the Buddha as the teacher of the path [lam ston pa po], the dharma as the path [lam], and the saṃgha as the companions along the path [lam grogs]. The followers of the causal refuge see the three jewels in this way. They accept only the Buddha as the teacher because they believe that only the Buddha has truly overcome suffering and reached ultimate happiness. They believe that the Buddha alone has discovered and traversed the true path to enlightenment. They believe that the path taught by the Buddha is the true path. They accept this path as their personal path and commit to accomplish it, and they consider the saṃgha as their companions along this path. They consider the saṃgha as virtuous friends [dge

ba'i grogs po] who help them increase their own virtue. Having this three-fold certainty [nges shes gsum] in Buddha, dharma and saṃgha is called the causal refuge.

Our teacher, Buddha Śākyamuni, first developed bodhicitta in a former aeon and gathered the accumulations of wisdom and merit during three countless aeons. Finally he was born as the son of King Suddhodana and attained complete enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree. The Buddha as the embodiment of the three or the four kayas is called the *jewel of the Buddha* [sangs rgyas dkon mchog]. The Buddha manifests as someone different from oneself. All statues of the Buddha are only his representations or substitutes [tshab] and should not be considered to be the real Buddha.

The dharma consists of the 'wisdom of statements' and the 'wisdom of realization' that dwells in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. Together they are called the *jewel of the sublime dharma* [dam chos dkon mchog].

The *teachings of statements* [lung gi chos] refers to the tripiṭaka, the three baskets [sde snod gsum]. They are the vinaya piṭaka, the basket of discipline ['dul ba'i sde snod]; the sūtra piṭaka, the basket of discourses [mdo sde'i sde snod]; and the abhidharma piṭaka, the basket of the doctrine [mngon pa'i sde snod].

The teachings of statements can also be divided into the twelve sections of scriptures [gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis]. The wisdom of statements is the wisdom that knows the statements of the three baskets [lung sde snod gsum ha go ba'i ye shes]. The wisdom of these three baskets is within the mind of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas who have the knowledge of having realized the teachings of the three baskets [lung sde snod gsum rtogs pa'i shes rab].

The 'teachings of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos] refers to the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che rnam pa gsum], which are the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. The wisdom of realization is the wisdom that comes from the practice of the three trainings [rtogs pa bslab pa gsum nyams len byed pa'i ye shes]. All the buddhas and bodhisattvas train in discipline, samādhi and hold knowledge in their minds.

In that way, one should understand that the sublime dharma is the wisdom of statements and realization dwelling in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. The dharma is the mind that has realized wisdom. The Buddhist books and scriptures are the representation of or substitute [tshab] for the sublime dharma. They are not the real dharma.

The saṃgha of the bodhisattvas such as Mañjuśrī and Maitreya, who have reached the level of *non-returners* [phyir mi ldog pa], is called the *jewel of the saṃgha* [dge 'dun dkon mchog]. Here, the word non-returner refers to those bodhisattvas who cannot fall back into saṃsāra. All bodhisattvas, from the first to the tenth level, are the main objects of refuge. All bodhisattvas who have not attained the level of a non-returner, the first bodhisattva level, are the minor objects of refuge. They are the saṃgha of ordinary beings [so so skye bo'i dge 'dun], who are the representatives of or the substitutes [tshab] for the noble saṃgha ['phags pa'i dge 'dun]. They are not the real saṃgha.

Our teacher, Buddha Śākyamuni, started out as a completely ordinary being. He took many rebirths as a good as well as a bad person. Once, due to his negative actions, he took rebirth in the hell realms, where he and another person were forced to pull a wagon. This wagon could barely be pulled by two people, much less by just one. Watching the demon overlord beating his companion and seeing his suffering, the future Buddha thought to himself, "This is hopeless. If I pull a little harder, perhaps it will alleviate his suffering." Immediately the henchman of hell said, "Every being is experiencing here the fruition of his own karma. How can you even think that you might be able to help him?" Then the demon smashed Śākyamuni's head with a hammer and he died. This was the first bodhisattva-like thought Buddha ever had as an ordinary being.

He took rebirth as the son of a potter and received the name Prabhāsa.[120] At that time a perfectly enlightened buddha with the name 'Great Śākyamuni' had appeared in this world. The child Prabhāsa went to meet this buddha and offered him five cowrie shells ['gron bu lnga], a pair of shoes [mchil lham zung gcig], an umbrella made of fine Benares cloth [ras kā śi ka],[121] and a pot of fired clay [rdza bum so btang ba] filled with water. When he looked at this buddha he saw that Great Śākyamuni was perfect in every aspect. His body, voice, mind, and entourage, everything about him was very appealing and magnetized the young boy. Looking at Great Śākyamuni the boy could not detect the slightest defect. Merely being close to him generated instant joy and bliss. The boy thought, "I am so impressed by the Buddha, I should make an aspiration to become like him."

> Lord Buddha, just like your body,
> Lifespan, size, realm of activities,
> Just like your noble and supreme marks,
> May I and all beings become exactly like you.

> bde bzhin gshegs pa khyed sku ci 'dra dang
> 'khor dang sku tshe tshad dang zhing khams sogs
> khyed kyi mtshan mchog bzang po ci 'dra ba
> de 'dra kho nar bdag sogs 'gyur bar shog

With great devotion he made this aspiration. Then the Buddha placed his right hand on the boy's head, saying, "May you attain enlightenment as the perfectly enlightened buddha in a future aeon in this 'world system of endurance' [mi mjed 'jig rten gyi khams, skr. sahalokadhātu], in the 'era of strife' [rtsod ldan dus; skr. kaliyuga], at a time when the

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[120] Some sources give skr. Ābhākara for the Tibetan snang byed.

[121] Kāśi is the old name for Benares (Vārāṇasī). The Sanskrit term kāśika or kāśikā refers to valuable textile products from Benares.

five degenerations [snyigs ma lnga][122] are ablaze, and may you bear the name of the glorious Śākyamuni." Thus, Great Śākyamuni made a prediction [lung bstan].

That aspiration was the first aspiration that our teacher Buddha Śākyamuni ever made. Based on this aspiration and based on the blessings and prediction of the Buddha called the 'Great Śākyamuni', our Buddha actually became exactly like him and was also called by his name. That story describes the beginning of Buddha Śākyamuni's bodhisattva activity.

Later on, at the time of a buddha called Buddha Ratnagarbha, he took rebirth as the Brāhmaṇa Samudrareṇu.[123] In front of Buddha Ratnagarbha he made five hundred great aspirations, praying that he would become enlightened in the impure realm of Sahalokadhatu, in the Kaliyuga, the age of strife, at a time when the five degenerations were ablaze. No other bodhisattva had ever made such aspirations since they perceived beings in the impure realms to be improper vessels for the teachings.

Text sections 161-163:

This quote from the third chapter of *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, the chapter on refuge, is difficult to understand. These words describing the resultant refuge ['bras skyabs] are considered words of tantra [rgyud kyi tshig]: *Understand that because this (person) wishes (to obtain in himself) the real (three jewels), his very acceptance is (born) out of compassion and love* ['di ni de dngos 'dod pas khas len de yang snying brtse las rig bya].

The meaning of this statement is: "Understand that because the person wishes to obtain the 'real' three jewels, he accepts them or goes for refuge to them. But his very going for refuge arises or is born from compassion and love" [gang zag 'di ni dkon mchog gsum po de dngos ma rang nyid thob 'dod pas khas len pa'am skyabs su 'gro bar byed gi yod red / skyabs su 'gro ba de yang snying rje dang brtse ba las byung ba'am skyes par rig par bya'o].

The word *this* ['di ni] refers to 'this bodhisattva' [byang chub sems dpa' 'di ni] or 'this person' [gang zag 'di ni]. *The real* [de dngos] means 'the real essence of the Tathāgata' [de bzhin nyid kyi dngos po] or 'the real essence of thatness' [de kho na nyid kyi dngos po] and connotes 'the ultimate three jewels' [mthar thug gi dkon mchog gsum] or 'the real three jewels' [dkon mchog gsum ngo ma], 'the essence of the three jewels' [dkon mchog gsum po'i ngo bo], the 'actual Buddha' [sangs rgyas ngo ma], the 'dharmakāya of the Buddha' [sangs rgyas kyi chos sku].

Because he wishes ['dod pas] means 'because he has the wish to obtain in himself' [rang nyid thob 'dod pas]. A bodhisattva wishes to actualize in himself the three jewels, the

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122 The degeneration of time [dus kyi snyigs], the degeneration of sentient beings [sems can gyi snyigs ma], the degeneration of lifespan [tshe'i snyigs ma], the degeneration of actions [las kyi snyigs ma], and the degeneration of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i snyigs ma]. Sometimes the 'degeneration of views' [lta ba'i snyigs ma] is listed in place of the 'degeneration of actions'.

123 bram ze rgya mtsho'i rdul

dharmakāya of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyis chos sku de rang nyid mngon du 'gyur ba'i 'dod pa]. The word 'acceptance' in the phrase *his very acceptance* [khas len de yang] means 'his going for refuge in itself' [skabs 'gro de yang]. *Out of compassion and love* [snying brtse las] means that 'the Mahāyāna refuge precepts are born out of compassion and love' [theg chen gyi sdom pa de snying rje dang brtse ba las byung bar].

The bodhisattva goes for refuge to the three jewels because he is endowed with the thought to free all sentient beings from suffering. He is not motivated by the wish to achieve ultimate enlightenment for his own sake. *Understand* [rig bya] means 'one must understand' [ha go bar bya'o].

The 'resultant refuge', or the 'fruitional refuge' ['bras skyabs], is the acceptance of the commitment, "With the wish to accomplish the real Buddha [sangs rgyas dngos ma], and the motivation to free all sentient beings from the fears and suffering of saṃsāra through love and compassion, I will achieve complete enlightenment." The resultant refuge is the commitment to accomplish in one's own mind the three ultimate jewels in order to relieve all beings of the suffering of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, the commitment [dam bca' ba] to actualize the three jewels in oneself.

Whereas in the 'causal refuge' [rgyu skyabs] the three jewels are considered as something external, different from oneself, in the 'resultant refuge' one knows the essence of one's mind to be the buddha nature, the ultimate Buddha. The 'resultant refuge' is the commitment to acknowledge this fact for what it is [yin pa la yin par dam bca' ba]. It is the thought, "I know that the essence of my mind is buddha nature, endowed with three aspects, empty essence [ngo bo stong pa], cognizant nature [rang bzhin gsal ba], and unrestricted responsiveness [thugs rje 'gags med]. I will practice until I have completely realized this buddha nature."

The hallmark [mtshan nyid] of the resultant refuge is committing to the fact that the fruition, the qualities of buddhahood, are already present in your mind. ['bras bu sangs rgyas kyi yon tan de da lta rang rgyud la yod par dam bca' ba]. You develop certainty about the fact that the fruition, the three kayas, is perfectly present within the essence of your mind, within your buddha nature. You make the firm resolve to accomplish and realize this buddha nature. In this way, the resultant refuge and the view [lta ba] are the same.

The ultimate [mthar thug pa] Buddha, dharma and saṃgha are the wisdom of inseparable knowledge [shes rab] and compassion [snying rje]. The ultimate, resultant refuge is committing oneself to accomplish that wisdom. This wisdom is identical with the essence of one's mind, the buddha nature. Once one has accomplished the three jewels, one is free from the fears and suffering of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and has oneself become the ultimate refuge object.

The ultimate object of refuge is the Buddha himself. Within Buddha all three ultimate jewels are complete. The Buddha himself is the real ultimate Buddha. The mind of the Buddha is the dharmakāya. That is the ultimate dharma. As the Buddha's wisdom and the Buddha's mind are inseparable, he is also the 'supreme among gatherings', the ultimate saṃgha.

The practitioner who understands this with acceptance, commitment and decisiveness, and who thinks, "I will accomplish the ultimate three jewels," is practicing the ultimate refuge. This, the resultant refuge means commitment to the fruition ['bras bu la dam bca' ba], committing to become just like the Buddha, gaining the same realization.

The practitioner must also be motivated by love and compassion for all sentient beings, thinking, "In order to liberate all sentient beings I will attain enlightenment." You must develop the heartfelt wish to liberate beings from all suffering of saṃsāric existence and peaceful nirvāṇa. You must understand that unless you reach the same realization as the Buddha, you will not be truly able to help all sentient beings. You need strong courage motivated by compassion.

The causal refuge does not enable one to liberate oneself and all beings from the suffering and fears of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa because causal refuge does not incorporate the ultimate three jewels. Causal refuge is also called the 'relative refuge' or 'outer refuge'. The resultant refuge covers the inner, secret and ultimate refuge.

Text section 164:

Let the three jewels constantly abide in your mind. Remember that the buddha nature is the ultimate state of happiness. Bring to mind that all sentient beings are naturally inclined toward happiness. This is because all sentient beings are endowed with the perfect buddha nature, the ultimate state of happiness, as the essence of their minds. This natural aspiration to happiness is a sign that beings are actually endowed with the buddha nature, although they are simply not aware of it.

Beings are confused about the causes that lead to happiness [bde ba'i rgyu]. Although beings want to be happy, to be free from suffering, they are unaware of the causes that lead to suffering. Suffering is the opposite of buddhahood, the state of perfect happiness. Suffering is temporary [glo bur ba] and is a state of delusion ['khrul pa]. Suffering is called saṃsāra.

The Buddha is the condition for happiness [bde ba'i rkyen]. The cause for happiness [bde ba'i rgyu] is the dharma, and the support for happiness [bde ba'i grogs] is the saṃgha. Thus, one commits to the Buddha as the perfect teacher [lam ston mkhan] of the path to enlightenment, to the dharma as the perfect path ['gro lam] to enlightenment, and to the saṃgha as those whose minds are endowed with the dharma as the perfect support [grogs] while on the path to enlightenment.

Jigme Lingpa defines the Mahāyāna saṃgha as 'all beings who are endowed with the genuine worldly view' ['jig rten yang dag pa'i lta ba]. The genuine worldly view entails abandoning the ten non-virtuous actions and practicing the ten virtuous actions. It further entails taking the three jewels as one's teacher and believing in karma, the law of cause and effect. Whoever accepts the Buddha as the condition for happiness, the dharma as the cause for happiness, and the saṃgha as the support for happiness is considered to have fulfilled the minimum requirement to be a member of the Mahāyāna saṃgha.

If you aspire to become the three jewels, you are practicing the resultant refuge. That aspiration by itself constitutes the resultant refuge. If you aspire to become the three jewels for the sake of all sentient beings, you are practicing bodhicitta. You have already expanded your mind beyond the confines of your own personal interests to the wider welfare of all sentient beings. Refuge by itself does not require this expansion, while bodhicitta is based on this very expansion.

Therefore, Atiśa said that the resultant refuge of Mahāyāna has a twofold commitment: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of enlightenment, and in order to do that I will attain complete enlightenment." There is a commitment for one's own benefit, to become the Buddha, and a commitment for the sake of others, to establish all beings on the level of the buddhahood.

The scriptures often define the bodhicitta of aspiration as the commitment to the fruition ['bras bu la dam bca' ba smon pa'i sems bskyed] and the bodhicitta of application as the commitment to the cause [rgyu la dam bca' ba 'jug pa sems bskyed]. One might wonder whether or not the resultant refuge ['bras skyabs] and the bodhicitta of aspiration [smon sems] are the same.

This issue was widely discussed by Indian and Tibetan scholars such as Acārya Sthiramati, a student of the great Indian scholar Acārya Vasubandhu, Lord Atiśa and so on. Acārya Vasubandhu had four students who were superior to himself: Guṇaprabha [yon tan 'od] was supreme in vinaya ['dul ba], Sthiramati [blo gro brtan pa] was supreme in abhidharma [mngon pa], Dignāga [phyogs kyi glang po] was supreme in pramāṇa [tshad ma], and Ārya Vimuktasena ['phags pa rnam grol sde] was supreme in prajñāpāramitā [sher phyin].

Text section 165:

Longchen Rabjam wrote that the difference between resultant refuge and bodhicitta of aspiration comes down to the difference between benefiting oneself and benefiting others. He said that the wish, "I go for refuge in order to attain perfect enlightenment" is refuge, while the wish, "I go for refuge in order to establish all sentient beings on the level of enlightenment" is bodhicitta. The former considers the benefit for oneself, and the latter considers the benefit for others. Mahāyāna refuge always needs to have the bodhicitta aspect of going for refuge, the motivation to take refuge for the sake of all sentient beings. If that aspect is lacking, one's refuge becomes a Hīnayāna refuge, "I go for refuge until I have attained enlightenment."

Text sections 167-170:

Although you might not practice refuge according to the Hinayāna teachings, you should know the difference between the Hinayāna and the Mahāyāna style of going for refuge. They differ in motivation [bsam pa / kun slong], in time frame [dus], and in regard to the object of refuge [skyabs yul].

The Hinayāna practitioner takes refuge with the motivation, "In order to liberate myself from the fears of saṃsāra and attain peaceful nirvāṇa I go for refuge until the end of this life." Thus the vinaya literature explains. The time-span is "from today onwards until I die."

The Hinayāna object of refuge [skabs yul] is the dharma of cessation ['gog pa'i chos], which brings about the Buddha and the saṃgha. It is the dharma of realization that dwells in the mind [thugs rtogs pa'i chos] of the Buddha and in the mind of the saṃgha. This dharma is the object of refuge.

The 'path of learning' [slob pa'i lam] refers to the 'stream-enterer', the 'once-returner' and the 'non-returner'. The path of 'no-more-learning' [mi slob pa'i lam] refers to the arhats and, on the highest level, to the Buddha. Nirvāṇa is the dharma of cessation ['gog pa'i chos], the truth of cessation ['gog bden]. Nirvāṇa is that which is beyond the truth of suffering and the truth of the origination of suffering. This dharma of cessation is the object of refuge.

The word nirvāṇa means 'transcending suffering' [myang ngan las 'das pa]. 'Suffering' refers to the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi bden pa] and the truth of origination [kun 'byung gi bden pa]. That which is beyond suffering and the origination of suffering is called nirvāṇa, 'transcending suffering'.

Vasubandhu describes the objects of refuge for the followers of the Hīnayāna in his *Abhidharma-koṣa-kārikā*:

> Whoever goes for refuge to the three (jewels)
> Goes for refuge to the dharma of no-more-learning which brings forth the Buddha, and
> To the dharma of both learning and (no-more-learning), which brings forth the saṃgha,
> (Thus) to nirvāṇa, (to the truth of cessation alone).

Whoever [gang zhig] means 'whoever the sentient beings may be' [sems can gang zhig]. *Goes for refuge to the three* [gsum la skyabs su 'gro ba] means 'goes for refuge to the three jewels' [dkon mchog gsum].

How does a Hīnayāna practitioner perceive the Buddha? He perceives the Buddha to be a product of the path of no-more-learning [mi slob pa'i lam], the ultimate truth of the path [lam bden mthar thug pa]. Therefore, refuge in the Buddha is going for refuge to the *dharma of no-more-learning, which brings forth the Buddha* [sangs rgyas byed pa'i chos mi slob pa].

The Hīnayāna practitioner considers the Buddha's mind to be endowed with the ultimate truth of the path [lam bden mthar thug pa]. The ultimate truth of the path is that which has brought all of Buddha's formerly existing afflictions to an end [snga yod gyi nyon mongs pa thams cad zad pa] and which keeps all afflictions from ever rising up again [slar mi skye bar shes pa'i lam bden mthar thug pa].

The Hīnayāna practitioner does not go for refuge to the body of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi gzugs sku] because he does not see any difference between the Buddha's body before his enlightenment, when he was still an ordinary being [so skye] and after his enlightenment, when he was a perfectly enlightened buddha.

How does a Hīnayāna practitioner perceive the saṃgha? He perceives the saṃgha to be the product of both the path of learning and the path of no-more-learning, which are both the dharma. Therefore, refuge in the saṃgha is going for refuge to the *dharma of both learning and no-more-learning, which bring forth the saṃgha* [dge 'dun du byed pa'i chos slob mi slob gnyis ka].

A Hīnayāna practitioner considers the minds of the saṃgha members to be endowed with the truth of the path. The truth of the path is nothing other than the 'wisdom that realizes egolessness' [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. This realization is dwelling in the mind of the Buddha and in the minds of the members of the noble saṃgha. This truth of the path is the object of refuge.

How does a Hīnayāna practitioner perceive the dharma? He perceives the dharma to be *nirvāṇa* [mya ngan 'das pa], *the truth of cessation alone* ['gog bden gcig pu]. That is his only refuge. Refuge to the dharma is going for refuge to the truth of cessation, to nirvāṇa.

The body of the Buddha is considered a residual, an empty shell that is subject to the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal bden pa'i lhag ma]. Buddha as King Śuddhodana's son with the name Siddhārtha [don grub] is regarded as an ordinary being [so so'i skye bo] who lived a worldly life, was married and had a child. Then he renounced his worldly life and perfected all five paths in one night, sitting on his seat in front of the Bodhi Tree, becoming the completely enlightened Buddha. Since he still had the same karma-produced body of the former Prince Siddhārtha, his body is regarded as the body of an ordinary being and is not an object of refuge. The Buddha, as the object of refuge, is the realization [rtogs pa] of the truth of the path of no-more-learning, which dwells in the Buddha's mind.

The bodies of the saṃgha members are also considered residuals, empty shells subject to the truth of suffering. The saṃgha, as the object of refuge, is the realization of the path of learning and the path of no-more-learning, which dwells in the minds of the saṃgha.

The dharma, as the object of refuge, is the truth of cessation, free from all desire, identical with nirvāṇa, the overcoming of all obscurations—all of which dwells in the minds of the Buddha and the saṃgha. But note that only the Buddha himself has overcome all obscurations, the obscuration of afflictions [nyon sgrib] and the obscuration of cognition [shes sgrib]. The saṃgha members have overcome only the obscuration of afflictions. This describes the three jewels in the Hinayāna tradition.

Taking refuge in the Buddha in the Hinayāna tradition means to take refuge in the wisdom dwelling in his mind—the realization of the truth of the path [thugs la yod pa'i lam bden rtogs pa'i ye shes]. Taking refuge in the dharma means to take refuge in the dharma of cessation. Taking refuge in the saṃgha means to take refuge in the minds of

the saṃgha members who have realized the wisdom of egolessness, the truth of the path [lam bden bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab].

Text section 171 / stanza 26:

In the Mahāyāna tradition, one should practice going for refuge with the following motivation, which differs from that of a Hinayāna practitioner: "In order to place all sentient beings, equal in number to the farthest reaches of space, on the level of perfect enlightenment, from now until the attainment of the 'essence of enlightenment' [byang chub snying po], I go for refuge to the Buddha, the embodiment of the four kayas and five wisdoms [sku bzhi ye shes lnga'i bdag nyid]. I go for refuge to the sublime dharma, the embodiment of the statements and realizations [lung dang rtogs pa'i bdag nyid], and I go for refuge to the gathering of the noble saṃgha of bodhisattvas."

The phrase *equal to the reaches of space* [nam mkha' dang mnyam pa] in these lines of refuge has a very extraordinary significance. The extension of space cannot be fathomed by the mind. Space has no center or periphery. "All beings, as many as exist throughout the reaches of space…" is a phrase that does not appear in any other religious tradition. Going for refuge on such a vast scale cannot be practiced by small-minded people, but is the practice of those who follow the Mahāyāna teachings.

The essence of awakening [byang chub snying po] means the very core, the buddha nature [bde gshegs snying po]. The dualistic mind is like a husk [shun pa], composed of karma [las] and afflictions [nyon rmongs pa], which covers the enlightened essence. The terms 'essence of awakening' [byang chub snying po], 'buddha essence' [sangs rgyas kyi snying po], and 'buddha nature' [bde gshegs snying po] all refer to the same enlightened state. This very state is the essence of your mind. It is nothing other than your own awareness wisdom [rang rig pa'i ye shes]. Once your own awareness wisdom has been actualized [mgnon du gyur ba], which means stabilized [brtan pa thob pa], then enlightenment is achieved. There is no enlightenment apart from awareness, buddha nature [rig pa bde gshegs snying po].

The phrase *until I attain the essence of awakening*[124] or 'until I arrive at the essence of awakening' [byang chub snying por mchis kyi bar / slebs kyi bar du] means 'until I have attained stability in awareness wisdom, the essence of awakening' or 'until I have attained buddhahood' [sangs rgyas ma thob gyi bar du]. Do not harbor any concepts about buddha nature. Any statement you make about it can only be relative. The absolute is not within the reach of the intellect [don dam blo yi spyod yul min].

Text section 172:

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[124] *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, endnote 110: "The Point of Enlightenment (byang chub snying po; skr. bodhinaṇḍa) refers to the *outer* place and time at which Śākyamuni and other buddhas attained manifest enlightenment, i.e. Vajrāsana, the Indestructible Seat, at Bodhgayā; to the *inner* Point of Enlightenment which is the Akaniṣṭha realm; and to the *secret* Point of Enlightenment which is the buddha-body of indestructible reality (vajrakāya)."

Going for refuge in the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna traditions also differ in terms of time-span [dus kyi khyad pa]. In the Mahāyāna tradition one does not go for refuge merely until the end of one's life but until the attainment of enlightenment.

Text sections 173-174:

The 26th stanza of the Bodhicharyavatara states: "I go for refuge to the buddhas until I attain the *essence of awakening*" [byang chub snying por bar]. Khenpo Kunpal gives a commentary on the phrase *essence of awakening*.

All buddhas of this fortunate aeon [bhadra kalpa] will attain enlightenment under the royal bodhi tree [byang chub shing dbang] in Bodhgayā. The bodhi tree is also called the 'royal bodhi tree' [byang chub shing gi rgyal po] and 'essence of awakening' [byang chub snying po]. Thus, the phrase *essence of awakening* can be understood as the name of the bodhi tree under which Buddha Śākyamuni attained enlightenment, as well as the place where the buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon attain enlightenment.

The various buddhas that appeared in different aeons or different realms have all attained enlightenment under their own personal bodhi trees. The tree is a symbol for solitude [dben pa'i rtags]. The buddhas attain enlightenment by meditating alone in a forest, not by practicing within a city. The Buddha Amitabha sat in front of the bodhi tree called *Illuminating Jewel Lotus* [rin chen padmo rnam par snang byed].

Just as all buddhas of the three times attain enlightenment under a bodhi tree, on an outer level one goes for refuge until one has also attained complete enlightenment under a bodhi tree. This marks the time-span for going for refuge to the three jewels on an outer level. One sits in the vajra-like samādhi until one has reached complete enlightenment.

On an inner level the time-span for going for refuge to the three jewels is marked by sitting in the vajra-like samādhi until one has completely realized awareness, the natural state of buddha nature. Once the natural state of buddha nature as it is has been realized, one has become enlightened.

Only the Buddha himself can perceive the dharmakāya as it really is. Even the noble beings, the arhats, pratyekabuddhas, bodhisattvas and great bodhisattvas cannot see buddha nature in the same way as Buddha. Therefore, Maitreya said in the Uttara-tantra:

> Even the noble ones (cannot see the buddha nature),
> Just as an infant cannot look at the shape of the sun from the house where it has just been born.
>
> btsas-pa'i khyim-nas bu-chung gis //
> nyi-ma'i-gzugs bzhin 'phags-pas kyang //

Buddha or buddha nature is wisdom, extremely subtle [shin tu phra ba], not the object of thoughts. Buddha is not within the reach of 'worldly meditation' ['jig rten pa'i bsgom

pa]. Dualistic consciousness [rnam shes] can never perceive buddha nature as it really is [gnas lugs ji lta ba bzhin du]. A newborn infant, whose eyes are too sensitve to bear the light of the sun, lacks the capacity to look at the sun itself. Likewise, not even noble beings who dwell on any of the ten bodhisattva levels can see the dharmakāya as the Buddha can, since bodhisattvas on the tenth level still have not overcome all obscurations of cognition [shes sgrib] and therefore have not actualized [mngon du ma gyur ba] non-dual wisdom [gnyis su med pa'i ye shes]. Bodhisattvas and yogins have partial glimpses of dharmakāya [chos sku'i cha shas], but not the unhindered outlook of the Buddha.

Text section 175-177:

The understanding of the extraordinary three jewels in the Mahāyāna tradition differs from the interpretation of the three jewels in the Hinayāna tradition. Concerning the *distinction of the object* [yul gyi khyad pa] of going for refuge, the special qualities of Buddha, dharma and saṃgha according to Mahāyāna, Maitreya's Uttara Tantra describes the qualities of the Buddha in the following manner:

> (1) Uncompounded, (2) spontaneously present,
> (3) Not realized through external conditions,
> Endowed with (4) knowledge, (5) love and (6) power—
> Such is the Buddha, endowed with the hallmark of twofold benefit.
>
> 'dus ma byas shing lhun gyis grub
> gzhan gyi rkyen gyis rtogs min pa
> mkhyen dang brtse dang nus par ldan
> don gnyis ldan pas sangs rgyas nyid

This Mahāyāna description of the qualities of the Buddha is divided into two sets. The qualities of the first set pertain to those that are of perfect benefit to oneself [rang don phun sum tshogs pa], which means the qualities that benefit the Buddha for himself [sangs rgyas kho rang la yod pa'i yon tan]. The qualities of the second set pertain to those that are of perfect benefit to others [gzhan don phun sum tshogs pa], the qualities of the Buddha that are directed to other people [gzhan la bltos pa'i yon tan]. The first set consists of three qualities: uncompounded, spontaneously present, and not realized through external conditions.

(1) *Uncompounded* ['dus ma byas] refers to the aspect of the empty essence [ngo bo stong pa'i cha] of buddha nature. It is primordial emptiness. The empty essence is not compounded or newly created by causes and conditions [rgyu rkyen gyis 'dus ma byad pa]. If something is newly created, it must be impermanent [mi rtag pa], conditioned, belonging to the skandha of formation ['du byed], defiling [zag pa], subject to suffering, and deceptive [bslu ba can]. This is exactly what Buddha or buddha nature is not.

(2) *Spontaneously present* [lhun gyis grub pa] refers to the aspect of the cognizant nature [rang bzhin gsal ba'i cha] of buddha nature. All qualities of buddha nature come from

this cognizant aspect. All qualities are primordial and spontaneously present [yon tan thams cad ye nas lhun gyis grub pa]. 'Qualities' refers to the qualities of body [sku], voice [gsung], mind [thugs], qualities [yon tan], and activities [phrin las]. They do not need to be created or made up, and they do not come about as something new [gsar du 'byung ba ma red].

These two aspects—uncompounded and spontaneously present—are the real Buddha, the real wisdom [ye shes], the true buddha nature. The words Buddha [sangs rgyas] and wisdom [ye shes] are synonymous. Milarepa said, "The Buddha himself is wisdom. There is no Buddha other than wisdom [sangs rgyas nyid ye shes yin gyi ye shes las gzhan du 'gyur ba'i sang rgyas med]." All qualities of the Buddha are nothing other than wisdom. Buddha's body, speech and mind are nothing other than wisdom, wisdom that is uncompounded and spontaneously present.

(3) *Not realized through external conditions* [gzhan gyi rkyen gyis rtogs min pa]. This wisdom cannot be realized through the vehicles that rely on striving [rtsol bcas kyi theg pa], but only through the effortless and self-existing Great Perfection itself. Buddha nature is beyond the reach of words and thoughts. It is inconceivable and inexpressible, something that can only be realized by 'one's own individual awareness wisdom' [so sor rang rig pa'i ye shes]. This wisdom is in oneself and can only be realized by oneself.

These three—uncompounded, spontaneously present, and not realized through external conditions—are the 'three perfect qualities that benefit oneself' [rang don gyi yon tan phun sum tshogs pa gsum], the first set of qualities.

The second set of qualities consists of the three qualities that bestow perfect benefits on others. Of these, the first is (4) *knowledge* [mkhyen pa]. Buddha's knowledge is twofold: a) the knowledge of the natural state [ji lta ba mkhyen pa], which is total realization of the absolute natural state [don dam gyi gnas lugs], and b) the knowledge of all there is to know [ji rnyed pa mkhyen pa], which is knowledge of all relative phenomena [kun rdzob gyi chos], i.e., omniscience. This is the knowledge of everything from all aspects [kun nas kun tu mkhyen pa]. It includes every field of knowledge [shes bya], everything from front to back, from inside out, from the most refined to the most gross levels. It is all-knowing and all-seeing simultaneously from every aspect and direction. Buddha can simultaneously see the body of a person from all sides. At the same time he knows every atom in the person's body down to the most refined level. He knows everything about the person's countless lifetimes down to the most minute detail. Buddha knows everything directly [mgnon sum], not indirectly or through deduction [rjes dpag].

The second quality benefiting other beings is (5) *love* [brtse ba]. Buddha's love extends to all sentient beings. His love does not increase for special people nor does it diminish for inferior beings. His love for all beings is utterly impartial and unconditional. Compared to Buddha's love, the love a mother has for her child is very small. Buddha's love is free from concepts [dmigs pa med pa'i brtse ba].

Since an ordinary being is still involved in concepts, if he somehow had true love for all sentient beings like the Buddha does, he would be unable to bear it. If an ordinary

person saw the suffering of the world as the Buddha does, that person would collapse and die. Only when emptiness is realized can one bear such love and knowledge. Ordinary beings are protected by their ignorance from really knowing the suffering of others. When one has truly recognized the natural state, the essence of one's mind, then non-conceptual love and compassion for all sentient beings will naturally shine forth.

The third quality benefiting other beings is (6) *power* [nus pa]. Buddha's knowledge, compassion and power all manifest from his realization of the natural state. The Buddha has the power to manifest his qualities in the perception of others so that he can be seen, heard, touched and met. These infinite qualities of body, voice, mind, qualities and activities appear in the perception of others. This power to manifest the three kayas externally is the actual emanation [sprul sku] of the Buddha.

The Buddha has the power to benefit whoever sees his body, hears his voice or thinks of him. Even meeting his relics in stūpas, or visiting places where he lived have tremendous benefits. The word 'power' [nus pa] also connotes 'activity' [phrin las],¸his unceasing activities on behalf of all sentient beings. Power also means that the Buddha is endowed with the methods [thabs] to truly overcome all afflictions and all suffering. That is why he is called the 'unexcelled precious teacher' [ston pa bla med rin po che]. These three—knowledge, love, and power—are the 'three perfect qualities for others' [gzhan don gyi yon tan phun sum tshogs pa gsum].

These are the six main qualities of the Buddha. If one adds the benefit for oneself and the benefit for others, one can count eight. The *basic distinction* [dbye gzhi] made in regard to Buddha's qualities is between the two sets of qualities, those that benefit oneself and those that benefit others. Thus, the benefiting qualities of the Buddha are *divided into six subdivisions* [dbye ba'i ya gyal du byas pas]. The Indian way of counting results in a total of eight qualities, because 'benefit to oneself' and 'benefit to others' are counted as two additional qualities. To us this seems as bizarre as counting the five fingers plus the hand to get six.

These eight qualities are the hallmark of a buddha. The Buddha is described as the *Buddha endowed with the eight qualities* [yon tan brgyad ldan gyi sangs rgyas]. The Buddha is also described as being endowed with three or four kayas. The three kayas are dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya. The fourth kaya is the svabhāvikakāya, the unity of all three kayas.

The dharmakāya is perceived by the Buddha alone, the saṃbhogakāya is perceived by the bodhisattvas, and the nirmāṇakāya appears to those with impure perception. According to one explanation [bshad stangs], only those bodhisattvas who dwell on the tenth level are able to perceive the saṃbhogakāya, while according to another explanation, the saṃbhogakāya is perceived by all bodhisattvas, from the first level onward until the tenth, each to a different degree.

Text sections 178-179:

The special qualities of the dharma according to Maitreya's Uttara Tantra are the following:

> (1) Inconceivable, (2) without two, (3) non-conceptual,
> (4) Pure, (5) luminous and (6) having remedial power—
> That which is and that which frees one from craving
> Is the dharma, endowed with the hallmark of the two truths.
>
> bsam med gnyis med rtog med pa
> dag gsal gnyen po'i phyogs nyid kyi
> gang zhig gang gis chags bral ba
> bden gnyis mtshan nyid can de chos

The dharma is called the 'dharma of realization, endowed with eight qualities' [yon tan brgyad ldan rtogs pa'i chos]. These qualities are divided into two sets. The first set consists of the three qualities of the truth of cessation ['gog pa'i yon tan gsum], and the second set consists of the three qualities of the truth of the path [lam gyi yon tan gsum]. These six qualities plus the names of each set add up by the same unique style of counting to the eight qualities of the dharma.

First, let us examine the truth of cessation. Among the four noble truths, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path are called the dharma. The truth of suffering and the truth of origination are what must be overcome or rejected [spang bya]. It is taught, "Suffering should be understood [ha go bar bya], but origination should be overcome [spang bar bya]."

Identifying suffering and understanding its nature is crucial. The 'origination' of suffering is karma and afflictions [las dang nyon mongs pa]. Moreover, the very cause of karma is afflictions. The very cause of afflictions is ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. The method [thabs] to overcome the origination of suffering is the truth of the path, and the result of having overcome the origination of suffering is the truth of cessation.

When one takes refuge in the dharma, one is taking refuge in the 'truth of cessation' and the 'truth of the path', but not in the 'truth of suffering' or in the 'truth of origination'. The truth of suffering and its origination are things to overcome [spang bya], not objects of refuge. While suffering and the origination of suffering are not the actual dharma, they become dharma once they have been overcome.

Cessation is free from craving, which is based in dualistic fixation. All afflictions such as desire ['dod chags], anger [zhe sdang], ignorance [gti mug], pride [nga rgyal] and jealousy [phrag dog] result from dualistic fixation or attachment. That which brings one to non-attachment or cessation is the path.

The dharma is the truth of cessation and the truth of the path. There are three wisdom qualities belonging to the truth of cessation and three wisdom qualities belonging to the truth of the path. Through the three wisdom qualities of the path, the three wisdom qualities of cessation are realized.

The first of the three qualities of cessation is the aspect of being (1) *inconceivable* [bsam med] because cessation cannot be penetrated by thoughts [bsam gyis mi khyab pa]. The dharma of cessation is beyond concepts [blo 'das], inconceivable [ma bsam] and inexpressible [brjod med]. The truth of cessation cannot be reached by intellect. As Śāntideva said:

> Since the ultimate is not within the reach of intellect,
> The intellect must be described as the relative.
>
> don dam blo yi spyod yul min
> blo ni kun rdzob yin par brjod

The second quality of cessation is the aspect of being (2) *without two* [gnyis med], meaning that the truth of cessation is without karma and afflictions [las dang nyon mongs pa med pa]. Cessation is without fixations and obscurations. Both the obscuration of afflictions and the obscuration of cognition are absent. As dualistic fixation or ego-clinging is absent, karma and afflictions are also absent.

The third quality of cessation is the aspect of being (3) *non-conceptual* [rtog med], meaning it is without thoughts. The truth of cessation is not an object of any of the 84,000 kinds of thoughts. Within cessation, all thoughts—subtle and gross—are pacified [rnam rtog phra rags thams cad zhi ba]. These three—inconceivable, without two, and non-conceptual—are the three qualities of the truth of cessation ['gog bden gyi yon tan].

The truth of cessation is realized through the truth of the path. The three qualities belonging to the truth of the path [lam gden gyi yon tan] are: (4) pure, (5) luminous, and (6) having remedial power. Here, these three qualities are explained in reverse order.

(6) *Having remedial power* [gnyen po] means that the dharma, from the first bodhisttva level until enlightenment, is the remedy for all afflictions [nyon mongs pa gnyen por gyur ba]. This is the remedial power of the dharma. The remedy to all that should be overcome is called the 'path without obstacles' [bar chad med lam]. What needs to be overcome are the obscuration of afflictions and the obscuration of cognition. The overcoming of the obscuration of afflictions is the attainment of the first bhumi, the first bodhisattva level. Once one has overcome what must be overcome, one has entered into the 'path of liberation' [rnam grol lam]. This is the aspect of liberation [grol ba'i cha] after the obscuration of afflictions has been overcome. From that point forward the path becomes increasingly clear—luminous and pure.

(5) *Luminous* [gsal ba] means that once all stains are purified, wisdom perception arises luminously [ye shes kyi snang ba gsal ba]. Wisdom perception is the capacity to understand and perceive everything with utter clarity. Like the sun, it illuminates all. This is the power of the dharma's luminosity.

(4) *Pure* [dag pa] means to 'be purified of temporary stains' [blo bur gyi dri ma dag]. From the first bodhisattva level until the tenth, stains remain to be purified along the path.

Once one has entered into the 'path of special progress' [khyad par du 'gro ba'i lam], one gradually progresses higher and higher. The higher one progresses along the path, the fewer stains remain to be purified. Only the Buddha is stainless or totally pure of all obscurations. This is the power of the dharma's purity.

Based on these three wisdom qualities of the path [lam gyi ye shes gsum], the three-fold wisdom of cessation will arise ['gog pa'i ye shes gsum]. The three qualities of the truth of cessation, the three qualities of the truth of the path, plus the two truths themselves are counted as the eight qualities of the dharma.

There are three kinds of cessation: the cessation of the arhats, the cessation of the bodhisattvas, and the cessation of the Buddha.

The cessation of the Buddha is utterly *pure* [dag pa], free from temporary stains. Its wisdom perception is *luminous* [ye shes kyi snang ba gsal ba]. It is the extraordinary knowledge and wisdom of the Buddha. It is *having remedial power* [gnyen po] for all afflictions.

That which frees one from craving [gang gis chags bral ba] refers to the abovementioned three wisdom qualities of the path: pure, luminous, and having remedial power. *That which is free from craving* [gang zhig chags bral ba] refers to the three wisdom qualities of cessation: inconceivable, without two, and non-conceptual.

That which is *free from craving* [chags pa dang bral ba] is called cessation. Craving [chags pa] is the craving of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i chags pa] or the craving of dualistic fixations [bzung 'dzin gnyis kyi chags pa]. Craving includes the obscurations of afflictions and of cognition. Cessation is free from all craving.

The dharma has the hallmark of the two truths [bden gnyis mtshan nyid can de chos]: the truth of the path and the truth of cessation. That is the definition of the dharma.

Because the truth of cessation cannot be penetrated by thoughts, it is (1) *inconceivable* [bsam gyis mi khyab pa]. Because it is the absence of karma and afflictions [las dang nyon mongs pa med pa], it is (2) *without two* [gnyis med]. Because all thoughts are pacified, it is (3) *non-conceptual* [rtog med pa]. These are the three ultimate qualities of cessation (1-3), *that which is free from craving* [gang zhig 'dod chags dang bral ba].

Cessation is attained *through that which frees one from craving* [gang gis 'dod chags dang bral ba]. This refers to the three wisdom qualities of the path: (4) *pure* [dag pa], (5) *luminous* [gsal ba], and (6) *having remedial power* [gnyen po]. Stated simply, through the path which frees one from craving, one arrives at cessation, which is free from craving. This is the 'dharma of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos], endowed with eight qualities and possessing the hallmark of the two truths.

Text section 180:

The *truth of cessation* [gog bden] is the overcoming of afflictions [nyon mongs pa spong ba'i bral cha]. It is the *absence of afflictions* [nyon mongs pa med pa'i cha]. Since cessation is the mere absence of afflictions according to the tradition of the śrāvakas, one might ask

whether or not the truth of cessation can still be classified under the *dharma of realization* [rtogs pa'i chos]. One would expect that the attainment of cessation would bring about 'a newly born realization that was previously not present' [sngar med gsar du skyes pa'i rtogs pa]. But no newly born realization is mentioned; instead only the absence of afflictions is mentioned. As the cessation of the śrāvaka is described as the ceasing of all activities of mind and mental patterns [sems dang sems byung thams cad kyi rgyu ba 'gag pa], how can there be any realization?

To clarify this issue, Khenpo Kunpal explains that cessation is the the *outcome* [bzhag pa] or the *result of having realized the truth of the path* [lam bden rtogs pa'i lag rjes].[125] Therefore, *through the truth of the path* [lam bden gyis] one achieves *the expanse free from craving* [chags pa dang bral ba'i dbyings gang zhig], which is an expanse or emptiness inseparable from wisdom. This expanse is called 'cessation' within the context of Mahāyāna.

This emptiness or expanse is inseparable from wisdom. The real cessation is 'not just mere emptiness' [stong pa stong kyang ma yin pa]. It is the unity of emptiness [stong pa nyid] and wisdom [ye shes]. This is the heart of the teachings of the Old School [rnying ma pa]. The 'expanse of absolute truth' [chos kyi dbyings] and the 'wisdom of the expanse of absolute truth' [chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes] are inseparable. That is called cessation, and is therefore classified under the 'dharma of realization'.

Generally, the ultimate truth of cessation is called the 'expanse dharmakāya' ['gog bden mthar thug dbyings chos sku]. The ultimate truth of the path is called the 'wisdom dharmakāya' [lam bden mthar thug ye shes chos sku]. One cannot separate the expanse from the wisdom; they are inseparable.

The followers of the Gelukpa school state that the expanse and the wisdom are separate, that they are different, while the viewpoint of the Nyingma School is: "Expanse and wisdom are inseparable [dbyings dang ye shes tha dad med pa]." This is a very important point. The iconography of the Nyingma School expresses this unity of expanse and wisdom as Samantabhadra and Samantabhadri in union. Cessation and path are the 'dharma of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos].

Text section 181:

The dharma of statements [lung gi chos] refers to the tripiṭaka [sde snod gsum]: the vinaya piṭaka ['dul ba'i sde snod], the sūtra piṭaka [mdo sde'i sde snod], and the abhidharma piṭaka [mngon pa'i sde snod]. It can also be divided into the twelve sections of scriptures [gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis].

The 'wisdom of statements' is the wisdom that knows the statements of the tripiṭaka [lung sde snod gsum ha go ba'i ye shes]. The wisdom of the tripiṭaka is within the minds

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125 The terms 'outcome' [bzhag pa], 'result' [lag rjes] and 'fruition' ['bras bu] have the same connotation in this context.

of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas who hold the knowledge of having realized the teachings of the tripiṭaka [lung sde snod gsum rtogs pa'i shes rab].

The dharma of realization [rtogs pa'i chos] refers to the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che rnam pa gsum]: the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. The 'wisdom of realization' is the wisdom that comes from practicing the three trainings [rtogs pa bslab pa gsum nyams len byed pa'i ye shes]. All the buddhas and bodhisattvas train in discipline and samādhi and hold knowledge in their minds.

In that way, one should understand that the sublime dharma is the wisdom of statements and the wisdom of realization in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. The 'real' dharma is the mind that has realized this wisdom. The Buddhist books and scriptures are the representations of or substitutes [tshab] for the sublime dharma. They are not the real dharma.

Accord with [rgyu mthun pa] has the same meaning as 'to be of the same kind' [rigs mthun pa] or 'to be beneficial to' [phan 'dogs pa], just as wood is beneficial to fire whereas water is not.

Text sections 182-184:

The saṃgha [dge 'dun] are the noble ones of the Mahāyāna who have attained the level of non-returners, all those who have attained the first bodhisattva level and will not fall back into saṃsāra. The Mahāyāna saṃgha are the special friends of a practitioner who goes for refuge, because they will accompany the practitioner until enlightenment.

The śrāvaka arhats and the pratyekabuddha arhats are counted as noble saṃgha, but they do not belong to the Mahāyāna saṃgha as they can lead the practitioner only to the level of an arhat, not to complete enlightenment like the bodhisattvas do. The bodhisattvas lead the practitioner from the smaller path of accumulation [tshogs lam chung nga] up to the level of complete enlightenment. The Hinayāna saṃgha are considered the 'close friends' [nye ba'i grogs po] of the practitioners while the bodhisattvas are considered the 'most intimate friends' [shin tu nye ba'i grogs po]. The arhats do not aspire to attain enlightenment; their goal is the level of Hinayāna cessation. They accompany the practitioner only part of the way.

Maitreya defines the hallmarks of the saṃgha in the Uttara Tantra:

> (1) As it is, (2) all there is, and (3) the inner—
> These are wisdom perceptions. When (obscurations) are purified (4,5,6),
> The wise belong to the gathering of non-returners
> And are thus endowed with unexcelled qualities.

> ji lta ji snyed nang gi ni
> ye shes gzigs pa dag pas na

blo ldan phyir mi ldog pa'i tshogs
bla med yon tan dang ldan nyid

The eight qualities of knowledge and liberation are the hallmark of the saṃgha [rig grol yon tan brgyad dge 'dun 'phags pa'i mtshan nyid]. The saṃgha are those who dwell on the path. They possess the three qualities of knowledge [rig pa'i yon tan gsum] and the three qualities of liberation [grol ba'i yon tan gsum].

The three qualities of knowledge are the three kinds of wisdom: (1) the wisdom that knows the natural state *as it is* [ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes], (2) the wisdom that sees *all there is* [ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes], and (3) *one's individual and distinct inner awareness wsidom* [nang so so rang rig pa'i ye shes]. These three are called *wisdom perception* [ye shes gzigs pa] or the three qualities of knowledge—as it is, all there is, and inner awareness wisdom. In this verse Maitreya lists only the qualities of knowledge but not the qualities of liberation, which will be explained below.

The non-returners [phyir mi ldog pa] in this context are the bodhisattvas from the first level onward, those who do not fall back into saṃsāra. They are called *the wise* [blo dang ldan pa], those who are endowed with wisdom.

A bodhisattva of the first level *directly* [mngon sum] realizes the natural state, the buddha nature. Thus, he recognizes (1) *the wisdom of knowing the natural state as it is* [ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes / rig pa], but his wisdom perception is still obscured. He sees the moon directly, but not clearly. In the same way, the bodhisattva has recognized the buddha nature directly, but not clearly. His wisdom perception sees that the buddha nature is present in all sentient beings. He knows directly that all beings, without exception, are endowed with buddha nature. Therefore, he knows that all beings have the potential to attain perfect enlightenment. Consequently, the wish to liberate all beings from their non-recognition of the buddha nature and to lead them to complete enlightenment naturally arises in his mind.

A bodhisattva sees that the empty essence of buddha nature is endowed with knowledge [shes rab] and wisdom [ye shes]. He perceives that the cognizant nature of the buddha nature is endowed with love [brtse ba] and compassion [snying rje]. He knows that the all-encompassing responsiveness [thugs rje kun khyab] of buddha nature is endowed with the potential to attain liberation and enlightenment. Therefore, he knows that all beings have the buddha qualities of knowledge [mkhyen pa], love [brtse ba] and capacity [nus pa] primordially present within their buddha nature.

A bodhisattva is also endowed with (2) *the wisdom that knows all there is to know* [ji snyed mkhyen pa'i ye shes / rig pa]. A limited aspect of this knowledge arises with the first bodhisattva level and increases from there on. A completely enlightened buddha has unlimited, total omniscience. To the extent that the bodhisattva has recognized the natural state as it is, he will perceive the buddha nature in others. He truly and directly sees it present in all beings and knows that it is the same buddha nature in all beings, free from all distinctions. This is the true source of the bodhisattvas's non-conceptual compassion [dmigs pa med pa'i snying rje]. Due to this insight, the bodhisattva can never

forsake any being. Until one has reached that level of insight, one's practice of compassion remains contrived and conceptual. As the bodhisattva progresses on the path through the levels, he gradually attains ultimate omniscience. The omniscience of the Buddha is infinite. He knows everything that exists throughout the three times.

(3) *One's individual and distinct inner awareness wisdom* [nang so so rang rig pa'i ye shes / rig pa] is the *non-duality* [gnyis su med pa] of *the wisdom of knowing the natural state as it is* and *the wisdom that knows all there is to know.* At that level the bodhisattva perceives that his own buddha nature and the buddha nature in all sentient beings are identical, are a *non-duality* [gnyis su med pa], without any difference [tha dad med pa]. He understands the non-duality of the relative and the absolute, the indivisibility of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa and so on.

Individual and distinct [so so rang] means that one must realize buddha nature by oneself for oneself. 'Individual' has the connotation of alone, single [gcig pu]. One's own individual and distinct awareness wisdom [so so rang rig pa'i ye shes] is the wisdom that recognizes one's personal and individual mind essence. This concludes the explanation of the three qualities of knowledge: (1) as it is, (2) all there is, and (3) inner.

Khenpo Pendze defines the phrase *individual and distinct awareness wisdom* [so so rang rig pa'i ye shes] in the following way: "Since it is not mingled with anything, it is *individual*. Since it is unmistaken about the essence of all objects, it is *distinct*. *Awareness* has the connotation of seeing. Since it is a knowledge that exists from the very beginning, it is *wisdom*, primordial knowledge."[126]

Awareness wisdom does not mingle with anything and is therefore 'individual' and not common [thun mong ma yin pa]. Awareness wisdom perceives the essence of 'all objects', all phenomena that exist. It perceives them 'distinctly' and 'unmistakenly' both through the knowledge of the natural state as it is and through the knowledge of all there is to know. Awareness wisdom clearly 'sees', knows and perceives everything. It is a 'knowledge' or wakefulness [shes pa] that is not newly acquired, a knowledge that is 'primordially' the very essence of each being's mind. This primordial knowledge, with which all sentient beings are endowed, can only be known by itself, by its individual and distinct awareness wisdom, and never through thought. When the obscurations of afflictions and cognition are cleared away, the realization of individual distinct awareness wisdom dawns naturally.

Now, to continue with the explanation of the three qualities of liberation, which are liberation from (4) the obscuration of attachment [chags sgrib], (5) the obscuration of cognitive limits [thogs sgrib], and (6) the obscuration of inferior motivation [dman sgrib]. Therefore, Maitreya says in the verse *when (obscurations) are purified* [dag pas na], implying liberation from these three obscurations.

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[126] gzhan dang ma'dres pas na **so so** / yul de dag gi ngo bo ma nor ba la **rang** / **rig pa** ni mthong ba'i don no / ye nas gnas pa'i shes pa yin pas na **ye shes** so.

Once the bodhisattva is liberated from the obscuration of afflictions [nyon mong gi sgrib pa], he is liberated from the obscuration of attachment. The obscuration of attachment means to be attached to whatever it may be, to have fixations ['dzin pa]. Once the bodhisattva is liberated from the obscuration of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa], he is liberated from cognitive limits. Then his knowledge is no longer obscured, that is to say, he is free from the obscuration of knowledge [mkhyen pa'i sgrib pa]. Everything will be clear and vividly known in his mind. His knowledge is unhindered and without limits.

Once the bodhisattva is freed from attachment to egotistic ideas [rang 'dod yid byed kyi zhen pa], he is liberated from the obscuration of *inferior motivation* [blo dman pa'i sgrib pa]. The inferior motivation to practice for his own sake collapses. To the extent ego-clinging decreases, inferior motivation decreases.

The three qualities of liberation are also listed as liberation from: (4) the obscuration of afflictions [nyon mong gi sgrib], (5) the obscuration of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa], and (6) the obscuration of meditative absorptions [snyoms 'jug gi sgrib pa]. The obscuration of afflictions pertains to desire ['dod chags], anger [zhe sdang], ignorance [gti mug], pride [nga rgyal] and jealousy [phrag dog]. The obscuration of cognition refers to dualistic fixations, which obscure the genuine recognition of buddha nature. The obscuration of meditative absorptions refers to the obscurations of samadhi [bsam gtan gi sgrib pa / ting nge 'dzin gi sgrib pa] that arise as long as the bodhisattva has not perfected his meditation skills [rtsal ma rdzogs].

Concerning the definition of saṃgha, the basic distinctions [dbye gzhi] are knowledge [rig pa] and liberation [grol ba]. Each of these two sets has three subdivisions, which are the three qualities of knowledge and the three qualities of liberation. The three qualities of knowledge and the three qualities of liberation plus the two categories of knowledge and liberation themselves, are counted as the eight qualities of the saṃgha [rig grol yon tan brgyad].

Since Buddha, dharma and saṃgha are each endowed with eight qualities, one can say that the three jewels of Mahāyāna are endowed with twenty-four qualities. As it is said:

> Being endowed with eight qualities of the twofold benefits is the hallmark of the jewel of the Buddha.
> Being endowed with eight qualities of cessation and path is the hallmark of the sublime dharma.
> Being endowed with eight qualities of knowledge and liberation is the hallmark of the noble saṃgha.
>
> don gnyis yon tan brgyad ldan sangs rgyas dkon mchog gi mtshan nyid
> 'gog lam yon tan brgyad ldan dam pa'i chos kyi mtshan nyid
> rig grol yon tan brgyad ldan 'phags pa'i dge 'dun gyi mtshan nyid

Text section 185:

The *incomparable teacher* is the Buddha. *Teacher* means the teacher of the path [lam ston pa po]. The *incomparable protection* is the dharma, protecting against all suffering [sdug bsngal las skyobs pa po]. The *incomparable guide* is the saṃgha, those who guide themselves and others to the higher levels.

Text sections 186-187:

Although for a beginner the dharma is the real refuge, the ultimate refuge is still Buddha himself, because the disciple wants to reach the same level as the Buddha. The dharma gives the beginner the actual means and methods to overcome suffering. Simply praying to the Buddha is not sufficient for liberation. The dharma must be practiced as it is the method that will take the disciple to enlightenment.

Buddha does not have the power to wash away the negative deeds or wipe off the defilements of beings with his hands. Nor does he have the power to transfer his wisdom realization to other people, thus granting them instant enlightenment. Rather he taught both the natural state, the ultimate peace, the buddha nature and the methods for practicing the path that leads to the realization of this wisdom. When students follow the Buddha's instructions they themselves will attain liberation and enlightenment.

Text section 188:

If one practices the sublime dharma, one protects oneself from the suffering of saṃsāra and the lower realms. Even someone who merely keeps the 'eight precepts observed for one day' [bsnyen gnas kyi sdom pa brgyad][127] has temporarily protected his mind from mistakes [nyes pa][128] and thus will take rebirth in the realm of the gods in his next life. The sublime dharma is so powerful that even limited practice brings about significant results. Therefore, the incomparable sublime dharma is the actual refuge for the beginner. The two other objects of refuge, Buddha and saṃgha, do not have the power to protect the beginner right away.

The eight precepts observed for one day are very important for all upāsakas, lay practitioners. Simply keeping these eight precepts is already the practice of dharma. A lay practitioner should keep these precepts regularly on either the full or new moon days. There are many lay practitioners who keep these eight precepts once or twice a month.

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127 The *eight precepts observed for one day* are: 1) not to kill [srog gcod pa]; 2) not to steal [ma byin par len]; 3) not to have sexual intercourse [mi tshangs par spyod pa]; 4) not to lie [rdzun du smra ba]; 5) not to take intoxicating beverages [myos par 'gyur pa'i chang]; 6) not to dance [gar], listen to or play songs [glu] or music [rol mo], and not to wear ornaments [rgyan], garlands [phreng ba] or perfumes [spos nyug]; 7) not to sleep on a high or large bed [khri stan che mtho]; and 8) not to eat after midday [dus ma yin pa'i kha zas].

128 Entry into dictionary: nyes ltung / nyes pas ltung ba / ngan song la ltung ba'i nyes pa – a mistake through which one falls into the three lower realms

Buddhist lay practitioners can take different kinds of precepts depending on their ability. One can distinguish six kinds of lay practitioners [dge bsnyen drug]:

1) A lay practitioner who decides that he exclusively commits to the three jewels as his refuge and embraces the refuge precepts obtains the status of an 'upāsaka, one who takes the three jewels as his refuge' [skyabs gsum 'dzin pa'i dge bsnyen].

2) If a lay practitioner decides that the abandonment of killing is the only precept he is able to maintain, then, by embracing this precept, he obtains the status of an 'upāsaka who holds one commitment' [sna gcig spyod pa'i dge bsnyen].

3) If a lay practitioner decides that the abandonment of killing and of taking what has not been given are the only precepts he is able to maintain, then, by embracing these precepts, he obtains the status of an 'upāsaka who holds two commitments' [sna 'ga' spyod pa'i dge bsnyen].

4) If a lay practitioner decides that the abandonment of killing, of taking what has not been given, and of speaking lies are the only precepts he is able to maintain, then, by embracing these precepts, he obtains the status of an 'upāsaka who holds most (of the five) commitments' [phal cher spyod pa'i dge bsnyen].

5) If a lay practitioner decides that the abandonment of killing, of taking what has not been given, of speaking lies, of sexual misconduct, and of consuming intoxicants are the precepts he is able to maintain, then, by embracing these precepts, he obtains the status of a 'complete upāsaka' [yongs rdzogs dge bsnyen].

6) If a lay practitioner decides that the abandonment of killing, of taking what has not been given, of speaking lies, of all sexual intercourse and of consuming intoxicants are the precepts he is able to maintain, then, by embracing these precepts, he obtains the status of an 'upāsaka of pure conduct' [tshangs spyod dge bsnyen].

Text sections 189-192:

The objects of refuge are considered differently in sūtra and tantra. In the sūtra tradition the refuge objects are Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. From the persepctive of tantra these are called the 'outer refuge' [phyi'i skyabs 'gro]. In addition, tantra teaches the inner, secret and absolute aspects of the same refuge objects. These four aspects of refuge become increasingly profound, with the more profound aspect always incorporating the less profound.

The 'inner refuge' [nang gi skyabs 'gro] in the tantra tradition is guru, yidam and ḍākinī. The guru is one's personal teacher from whom one has received empowerments [dbang], reading transmissions [lung], and oral instructions [khrid]. The ultimate guru, the root guru, is the master through whom one has recognized the essence of one's mind [sems ngo], one's buddha nature, beyond any doubt. In tantra practice it is essential to view one's root guru as identical with the Buddha.

The yidam is the meditation deity with whom one has connection from former lifetimes. The yidam meditation deity represents the dharma. The ḍākinī is a female

buddha and represents the saṃgha, since the ḍākinī supports the practitioner on the path to enlightenment. Guru, yidam and ḍākinī are called the 'three roots' [rtsa ba gsum]. The guru is the root of blessing [byin rlabs kyi rtsa ba bla ma]; the yidam is the root of accomplishments [dngos grub gyi rtsa ba yi dam]; and the ḍākinī is the 'root which dispels all obstacles' [bar chad thams cad sel ba'i rtsa ba mkha' 'gro], also refered to as the 'root of activities' [phrin las kyi rtsa ba].

The 'secret refuge' [gsang ba'i skyabs 'gro] includes the nadis (channels), pranas (energies) and bindus (essences). In their impure aspect, nadis, pranas and bindus constitute the physical human body. In their pure aspect they constitute the subtle body of the three kayas. In their pure aspect the nadis are the nirmāṇakāya, the pranas are the saṃbhogakāya, and the bindus are the dharmakāya. Although nadis, pranas and bindus are in essence primordially pure [ngo bo ye dag], they are temporarily obscured through ignorance and delusion, appearing to us as our impure body, speech and mind. Through tantric practices, the yogin purifies them of temporary obscurations [glo bur bral dag] and thus achieves the three kayas.

The absolute refuge [don dam pa'i skyabs 'gro] is the three kayas—dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya. These three kayas are viewed as three aspects of the buddha nature. The unborn empty essence [ngo bo stong pa] of buddha nature is the dharmakāya. The cognizant nature [rang bzhin gsal ba] of buddha nature is the saṃbhogakāya, and the unified responsiveness [thugs rje zung 'jug] of buddha nature, the unity of the empty essence and the cognizant nature, is the nirmāṇakāya.

The meditation experience of the empty essence is an experience of non-thought [mi rtog pa'i nyams]. The meditation experience of the cognizant nature is an experience of clarity [gsal ba'i nyams], and the meditation experience of the responsiveness is an experience of bliss [bde ba'i nyams]. Thus, in the tradition of the Old School of Secret Mantra [gsang sngags rnying ma], the refuge objects may be *nadi, prana and bindu* [rtsa rlung thig le], referring to the secret refuge. The refuge objects may also be *bliss, clarity and non-thought* [bde gsal mi rtog pa], or *essence, nature and responsiveness* [ngo bo rang bzhin thugs rje], both of which refer to the absolute refuge of the three kayas.

Intending to purify the nadis, pranas and bindus of one's body, one commits to the goal to achieve their pure aspect, the three kayas, and practices relevant yogic techniques that will result in the three kayas. The refuge commitment to nadi, prana and bindu is: "I will practice that which primordially has the nature of the three kayas exactly as it is" [ye nas sku gsum gyi rang bzhin yin pa la yin par gso gi yin].

Without knowing the difference between refuge and supplication, taking refuge to nadi, prana and bindu has no meaning. Refuge to the nadis means, "I commit to accomplish the pure aspect of the nadis, which is the nirmāṇakāya." But if one confuses refuge with a supplication and supplicates nadi, prana and bindu by saying, "Nadi, prana and bindu, please protect me," then one has completely missed the point. It is pointless to put one's hope in nadi, prana and bindu.

All three—Buddha, dharma and saṃgha—are the objects of refuge. Among them the dharma is the most important object of refuge for the beginner because it is the

dharma that will change his mind. The objective of a follower of Buddha is to reach enlightenment, and only the practice of the dharma leads to enlightenment. Neither the Buddha nor the saṃgha can make you enlightened. You can attain enlightenment only by following the dharma, the path taught by the Buddha. But the final goal is to become the same as the Buddha, to reach enlightenment. Therefore, the Buddha is not the main refuge for a beginner, but the ultimate refuge. For as long as one is still on the path of learning, one is called a beginner. Reaching the path of no-more-learning [mi slob pa'i lam], one is no longer a beginner.

While a beginner can both take refuge in and supplicate Buddha and saṃgha, the dharma cannot be supplicated; it must be practiced. Taking refuge in the dharma really means making the commitment: "I not only intend to practice; I promise that I will practice the dharma". When one practices according to this commitment, one's dharma practice will be successful. Since it is only through the methods of the dharma that a beginner can reach enlightenment, a beginner must apply the dharma to his own mind with the commitment to really practice and integrate the teachings. This is a very important point to understand. Taking refuge in the dharma means commiting one's mind to increase knowledge and compassion.

Only the practice of dharma can change one's mind. Only through the practice of the dharma can the beginner embark on the path to enlightenment. The Buddha cannot confer his realization to the beginner. A personal effort to practice the dharma is necessary.

Many people object to the secret refuge objects of the Old School because they do not know the difference between going for refuge and making a supplication. A practitioner of the Old School might be asked, "How can you go for refuge to nadi, prana and bindu? That is absurd. How can bliss, clarity and non-thought grant you protection and refuge? What nonsense!" A practitioner of the Old School who cannot answer such criticism may become upset and start doubting his own practice. Such practitioners are ignorant, not knowing that refuge to nadi, prana and bindu means the commitment: "I commit to accomplish the pure aspects of nadi, prana and bindu, which are nirmāṇakāya, saṃbhogakāya and dharmakāya."

A story is told of a scholar called Akhu Dam Chö [a khu dam chos] who did not know the difference between refuge [skyabs 'gro] and supplication [gsol 'debs]. He started out as a student of the Old School and then went to study for forty or fifty years with the Gelukpa School. He became an intellectual [rtog ge ba] and wrote a refutation[129] of Mipham Rinpoche's interpretation of the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and of Madhyamakālaṃkāra-kārikā.[130] As an old man, he stayed in retreat. He had practiced 'peaceful abiding' [zhi gnas] for a long time and would sometimes stay a few days withdrawn in absorption, neither moving his body nor eating any food. One day,

129 dam chos brgal lan

130 dbu ma rgyan

while he was reciting the refuge prayer from the Longchen Nyingthig, he was startled by the lines of refuge which say:

> To the essence of the three jewels, the Sugata; and to the three roots;
> To bodhicitta, the nature of the nadis, pranas and bindus;
> And to the mandala of essence, nature and capacity,
> I go for refuge until (I reach) the heart of enlightenment.
>
> dkon mchog gsum dngos bde gshegs rtsa ba gsum
> rtsa rlung thig le'i rang bzhin byang chub sems
> ngo bo rang bzhin thugs rje'i dkyil 'khor la
> byang chub snying po'i bar du skyabs su mchi

He began to wonder, "How can my own nadi, prana and bindu be of any help to me? How can I take refuge in them?" He went to see Tertön Sogyal [gter ston bsod rgyal]. Tertön Sogyal was very surprised to see this old and famous scholar and asked him, "What brought you here?" Akhu Dam Chö said, "I have an important question to ask. How can I go for refuge to my own nadi, prana and bindu?" Tertön Sögyal answered, "These lines of the refuge liturgy are classified as the 'resultant refuge' ['bras skyabs], not as the 'causal refuge' [rgyu skyabs]. Don't confuse refuge with supplication [gsol 'debs]! Understand that the essence of refuge is acceptance [khas len], commitment [dam bca' ba] and resolve [thag chod pa]. When you practice that kind of refuge you make the commitment to accomplish the pure aspect of your nadis, pranas and bindus, which are the three kayas, nirmāṇakāya, saṃbhogakāya and dharmakāya." This story shows that sometimes even great scholars do not understand the meaning of refuge.

Text section 193:

Were someone to ask, "If dharma is the main refuge, then why are Buddha and saṃgha mentioned as refuge objects at all?" The answer to that question is that had the Buddha not appeared in this world, we would still dwell in ignorance, not even knowing the word 'dharma'. But because Buddha did appear and perfectly taught to sentient beings the unfailing path [lam ma nor ba] that he himself had traversed, the Buddha, the teacher of the path, is a refuge object. The point here is that acceptance, commitment and certainty in one's mind regarding the Buddha do not by themselves lead to enlightenment. One needs to enter into the path of the dharma. That is why the dharma is more important.

We, the beings of this degenerate age, lack the good fortune to have met the Buddha face to face but are instead guided on the genuine path to liberation by the *saṃgha* [dge 'dun]. Therefore, the saṃgha, our companions along the path, are also a refuge object. The saṃgha consists of the representatives [tshab] of the Buddha. The saṃgha of

teachers and spiritual friends guide us, sentient beings endowed with the five degenerations,[131] on the genuine path to enlightenment.

Text section 194:

The way of going for refuge to the three jewels is to go for refuge to the Buddha as the teacher, to the dharma as the path, and to the saṃgha as the companions [dkon mchog gsum la ston pa lam grogs kyi tshul du skyabs su 'gro dgos] along the path.

Our teacher is the perfect Buddha, the Enlightened One. Buddha is the one who has purified the two obscurations—the obscuration of afflictions and the obscuration of cognition—and has attained the realization of the twofold knowledge—the knowledge of the natural state and the knowledge of all there is to know. Because the Buddha is free from all biased views, he is the perfect teacher.

One is committed to Buddha as the teacher; one is committed to practice his teachings as he taught them. Do not accept teachers who teach biased or extreme views [mtha' smra ba'i ston pa] as your personal teacher, and do not follow their teachings. Do not listen to non-dharma coming from those who uphold biased views, such as parents, relatives or friends. *Non-dharma* [chos min] means statements that are not in accord with the natural state of things [dngos po gnas lugs dang mi mthun pa'i chos]. Not listening to non-dharma means not following non-dharma. Of course, one can read, listen to and study all types of teachings from any spiritual path. Once having committed oneself to the dharma, however, one should follow only the path taught by the Buddha.

Tīrtikas [mu stegs pa][132] are those who uphold biased views [mtha' brten gi lta ba stegs pa], those who take one of the four extremes as their path [mu bzhi la lam stegs su bca' ba]. The four extremes are: 1) the extreme of eternalism [rtag mtha'], 2) the extreme of nihilism [med mtha'], 3) the extreme of both existence and non-existence [yod med gnyis ka'i mtha'], and 4) the extreme of neither existence nor non-existence [yod med gnyis ka ma yin pa'i mtha']. Those who believe in an eternal life after death are upholding the view of eternalism. Those who do not believe in karma, the law of cause and effect, who do not believe in previous or future lifetimes, are upholding the view of nihilism.

If a Buddhist practitioner well-versed in Buddhist philosophy and practice also engages in studies of the systems of the tīrtikas, his faith in Buddhism will become even firmer. As it is said:

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131 The five degenerations are: the degeneration of time [dus kyi snyigs], the degeneration of sentient beings [sems can gyi snyigs ma], the degeneration of lifespan [tshe'i snyigs ma], the degeneration of actions [las kyi snyigs ma], and the degeneration of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i snyigs ma]. Sometimes the 'degeneration of views' [lta ba'i snyigs ma] is listed in place of the 'degeneration of actions'.

132 The Sanskrit word tīrtika is often translated as 'heretic', but tīrtika in fact refers to someone who is on a path other than the Buddhist one.

The more I scrutinize
The texts of tīrtikas,
The stronger becomes my faith
In you, Lord Buddha.

mu stegs can gyi gzhung lugs la
ji lta ji ltar rnam bsams pa
de lta de ltar mgon khyod la
bdag gi sems ni dad par gyur

A dharma practitioner who has committed to practice the sublime dharma according to the instructions of the Buddha should abstain from negative worldly activities such as *business* [tshong], *farming* [so nams], *fighting enemies* [dgra 'dul], *maintaining family* [gnyen skyongs] and so forth. This statement is mainly meant for monks, nuns, yogins and yoginis. All Buddhist lay practitioners who are still involved in worldly actitivies, should at least maintain this as an aspiration.

If you lack the firm commitment to avoid worldly activities, the infectious influence of work, family, socializing, entertainment and so on will keep you away from genuine dharma practice. Recognizing the virtual impossibility of keeping dharma commitments one hundred percent, an authentic practitioner must at least maintain the proper aspiration, the goal being to ultimately separate himself completely from all worldly activities. A mind that lacks commitment easily becomes lost, blown about like a piece of paper in the wind. On the other hand, if a practitioner is too uptight about his commitments, he is in danger of becoming inflexible and hard in his mind. A beginning practitioner who attempts to commit to completely disengage from worldly activities will engage in them to a certain extent anyway because of the force of his habitual patterns. However, the basic commitment not to engage in worldly activities gives him direction.

Relatives, friends and acquaintances have a strong impact on one's mind. Only through strong commitment and resolve to practice the dharma can a practitioner guard himself against this influence. Internally, a practitioner must guard himself against the habitual patterns of his own mind. Externally, he needs to guard himself from negative, non-dharmic influences.

The masters advise: "Neither fight enemies nor maintain friends" [dgra 'dul gnyen skyong ma byed]. Avoid getting caught up in hateful relationships. At the same time, do not become overly involved with relatives and friends. The golden rule is to be neither too friendly nor too unfriendly [ha cang mi mdza' mi mthun gnyis ka ma byed]. Maintain an approach that does not give people a reason to like you or dislike you intensely. Furthermore, do not be shrewd in business [tshong mkhas po ma byed], and as soon as you are able, stop doing business. Without a doubt, relatives, friends, enemies and business dealings distract practitioners the most.

Lay practitioners who are householders need a particularly strong commitment to dharma practice in order to eventually disentangle themselves from worldly activities. Maintain a strong commitment and resolve in your mind, and in daily life do the best you can. Take the best practitioners as your example, and make daily aspirations to become like them. Set your mind on practice in solitude like Milarepa. Resolve in your mind to practice like the Buddha and to become exactly like him. Strive for the best, for complete enlightenment, recognizing that your own habitual patterns will slow you down anyway.

A practitioner needs to think, "I will liberate all sentient beings from the suffering of saṃsāra." Although you recognize your lack of capacity—in the face of the enormity of the task—to free all sentient beings, you must still adhere to that commitment and resolve. Simply having that noble thought, the sincere bodhisattva attitude, already accumulates the same merit as actually accomplishing it. That is why one should take these great and noble thoughts and motivations very seriously. These thoughts have tremendous power and merit. Always keep the thought that you will attain complete enlightenment, that you actually will liberate all beings from their suffering, and that you will establish them on the level of supreme buddhahood. Having created that thought with true commitment and resolve, you gain the same merit as if you had actually completed this great task. Reciting the lines of bodhicitta aspiration just as mere lip-service to the tradition, not really thinking it is possible, has no benefit. Heartfelt commitment and resolve are required.

At the time when King Prasenajid [gsal rgyal], the king of Kosala, had invited the Buddha and was preparing great offerings, a young beggar girl [bu mo dbul mo] who lived on alms offered a little bit of corn oil ['bru mar] in a potsherd [gyo dum] in which she had placed a wick. With utmost faith [dad pa bla na med pa] she offered prostrations to the Buddha and made following aspiration [smon lam]: "Through this root of virtue may I become exactly like our teacher, the Buddha, and become enlightened at a time when sentient beings only live up to a hundred years and may I be known as Śākyamuni. May I have students like the supreme *Śāriputra* [sha ri'i bu], who is endowed with wisdom, and like the supreme *Maudgalyāyana* [maudgal gyi bu], who is endowed with magical powers. May I have an attendent like Ānanda [kun dga' bo], a mother like Māyādevī [sgyu 'phrul lha mo], and a son like Rāhula [sgra gcan 'dzin]."

In the evening, Buddha's attendent Ānanda came to extinguish the lamps. With a flick of his hand he extinguished them one by one. But when he came to the lamp of the beggar girl he could not put the flame out. Then he tried to blow the flame out with his fan [rlung yab], but that also did not work. He gathered all his breath to blow it out, but still failed. "This is strange," he thought. He told the Buddha what happened and asked for an explanation. The Buddha replied, "Even a storm could not extinguish this lamp because this beggar girl made an aspiration to reach enlightenment, to become

exactly like me, Buddha Śākyamuni." It was reported that the beggar girl's lamp burned for seven days, outshining all the other offerings.[133]

Text section 195:

One goes for refuge to the noble saṃgha as companions, friends or guides along the path. When traveling through Tibet with a *tour leader* [sgar dpon], one follows his advice about where to camp, when to eat and so forth. He is the traveler's companion and friend, leading him all the way to the destination. People and guides who are traveling to different destinations cannot be your companions; neither can those who are traveling only part of the way. They cannot serve as ultimate guides.

In the same way a practitioner should not fall under the influence of anyone, be it a spiritual or worldly person who causes him to be distracted by *the eight worldly concerns* ['jig rten chos brgyad], which are: 1) gain [rnyed pa] and 2) loss [ma rnyed pa]; 3) fame [snyan] and 4) disrepute [mi snyan]; 5) praise [bstod pa] and 6) blame [smad pa]; and 7) pleasure [bde ba] and 8) pain [mi bde ba].

These eight points describe the egocentric goals and fears of worldly people. Pursuing these self-centered goals in action and thought, one is not following the teachings of the Buddha in a genuine way. A person who is motivated by personal gain, fame and so on is a worldly person, regardless of his appearance. Being motivated by the eight worldly concerns, one can never truly practice the Mahāyāna path.

A worldly person enjoys gaining wealth and is depressed by loss. The wealth he accumulates makes him happy, his major goal in life being riches and comfort. Only if one's aspiration for wealth is motivated by the desire to help others does one qualify as a lay follower or bodhisattva of the Buddha's teachings.

A worldly person desires fame and honor but is averse to disrepute. If a bodhisattva desires to reach a certain level of fame in order to help beings and disseminate the teachings of the Buddha on a broader scale, he still qualifies as a follower of the Buddha's teachings.

A worldly person likes to be praised and hates to be blamed or criticized. If one aspires to be beautiful, rich, powerful and intelligent because one enjoys being praised, one is a totally worldly person and is leading an ultimately meaningless and pointless life.

Do not maintain close friendships with people who lead you into the eight worldly concerns. Do not have intimate conversations [kha], exchanging personal ideas [blo] with them. *Do not imitate* [gcig tu mi byed] any person involved in the eight worldly concerns in *conversation, thinking or behavior* [kha blo spyod gsum].

The good qualities of a person who falls under the influence of someone negative are liable to diminish. While an individual with positive qualities may have a slight beneficial influence on someone negative-minded, a beginning practitioner without

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133 See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 490-494.

sufficent stability is more likely to succumb to negative influences. When dealing with negative-minded people you must really watch your behavior, speech and mind. You need to have the firm resolve not to fall into negative habits due to the infectious influence of negative persons. As Gedün Chöphel once said:

> Fools do not follow me
> And I do not follow fools.
> That is the foremost vow of the wise.
> Even when my life is at stake, I will endeavor to keep it.

> blun pos rang gi rjes su mi 'gro yang
> rang nyid sgug pa'i rjes su mi 'gro ba
> 'di na mkhas pa'i dam tshig dang po red
> srog la babs kyang 'bad pas bzung

Text section 196:

Furthermore, not even the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas qualify as ultimate companions [mthar phyin pa'i grogs po] on the path because they do not aspire to complete enlightenment. They are satisfied with the level of an arhat. They are friends along the path but not ultimate friends like the bodhisattvas. Follow the example and the life stories of the Buddha and great bodhisattvas and take them as your ultimate friends along the path to enlightenment.

In particular, take care not to associate yourself closely with anyone who tries to turn you away from the dharma. Any associate, acquaintance or friend who distracts you from learning and practicing the Buddha's teachings is an 'evil friend' [bdud gyi grogs po]. You should strongly resolve to avoid such persons. An evil friend is not someone with horns on his head but someone who causes obstacles to your dharma practice.

In the same manner, never interrupt another person's dharma practice and do not dissuade others from practicing the dharma. Always try to respect other people's practice time and space.

Text section 197:

Merely knowing about going for refuge is not enough. A practitioner must receive the refuge precepts in the proper fashion from a qualified teacher. After receiving the precepts [sdom pa] he needs to maintain them through the trainings [bslab bya]. A practitioner should always keep these precepts in his heart.

The refuge precepts are maintained by observing the three sets of general precepts and the five special precepts. The three sets of general precepts are: the three precepts concerning prohibitions [dgag pa'i bslab bya gsum], the three precepts concerning obligations [bsgrub pa'i bslab bya gsum], and the three supplementary precepts [cha mthun gyi bslab bya gsum].

Text section 198:

In detail, the three precepts concerning prohibitions are: (1) Having gone for refuge to the Buddha, do not take saṃsāric gods as a permanent refuge and do not pay homage or present offerings to them. Permanent refuge [gtan gyi skyabs] means until the attainment of enlightenment. You cannot take refuge to worldly gods thinking that they can grant liberation from the suffering of saṃsāra because they themselves are still dwelling in saṃsāra. Some worldly gods are nevertheless regarded as members of the Buddhist saṃgha and are, therefore, worthy of offerings. They can grant temporary refuge and help. Gods who dwell within saṃsāra are not free from ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. Do not accept any of them as an ultimate or permanent refuge.

(2) Having gone for refuge to the dhamra, one should never harm any sentient being, not even in dreams. This is because the essence of the dharma is knowledge and compassion, as well as peace and happiness [zhi bde]. One with knowledge and compassion will never harm other beings. If you have a violent dream of harming or killing others, regret and amend that negativity immediately upon waking by offering confession.

(3) Having gone for refuge to the saṃgha, do not associate with those who hold extreme or biased views [mtha' 'dzin gyi lta ba yod mkhan]. *Not associate* [mi 'grogs] means keeping a distance [mtha' ring bso dgos] from such people, but it does not mean completely rejecting them. Furthermore, do not mingle with those who slander your personal teacher or the dharma. Do not accept teachers or systems which teach ego-clinging or any extremist view of eternalism or nihilism since they are propagating a wrong path. The saṃgha are those who further and enhance one's qualities and practice on the genuine path to enlightenment. In order to protect a beginner's understanding of Buddhism from wrong ideas this refuge precept advises him not to associate with real tīrtikas. This is not a prohibition against having friendly relations with followers of other systems.

Text section 199:

A quote from the *Puṇḍarīka-sūtra* shows the purpose of paying respect to any representation of Buddha's body, speech and mind:

> Emanating a multitude of various forms,
> They benefit beings by inspiring them to virtue.

In this context one must understand that Buddha is wisdom and not a person. Paying respect to the representations of Buddha's body, speech and mind is not a personality cult. Buddha is the fruition of the path [lam gyi 'bras bu], the ultimate wisdom attainable.

His nirmāṇakāya or emanations bestow great benefit on beings. According to Mipham Rinpoche,[134] one can distinguish different nirmāṇakāyas of the Buddha: the 'supreme nirmāṇakāya' [mchog gi sprul sku], the 'created nirmāṇakāya' [bso ba sprul sku], the 'rebirth nirmāṇakāya' [skye ba sprul sku], and the 'manifold nirmāṇakāya' [sna tshogs sprul sku].

All representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind [sku gsung thugs rten] are considered to be 'manifold nirmāṇakāya'. This term also includes relics of the Buddha as well as anything which can benefit sentient beings, such as lotus flowers, jewels, medicine, food, clothing, vehicles, bridges, and so forth.

Buddha Śākyamuni, as a bodhisattva, made countless aspirations that he might benefit all beings who see, hear, touch or think of him. As the result of his aspirations we are able to meet Buddha's body, speech and mind through his three representations.

Buddha is not 'a creator' [byed pa po]. Buddha is the condition of happiness [bde ba'i rkyen], while the dharma is the cause of happiness [bde ba'i rgyu]. Based on statues, representations [tshab / rten] of the Buddha, practitioners can gather inconceivable merit. The statues themselves contain no blessing. Recognizing the statue as a representation of the Buddha carries the blessing. Having taken refuge, treat all representations of Buddha's body, speech and mind with respect.

Some people hold the strange view that only the bodhisattvas are able to help sentient beings while the Buddha is too far removed from beings to help them. Based on this wrong idea these people vow to remain as bodhisattvas in saṃsāra and do not aspire to reach complete enlighenment in order to help sentient beings.

In reality only a perfectly enligthened Buddha can truly help all sentient beings. The capacity of even a highly realized bodhisattva to reach all sentient beings is limited. Not even great bodhisattvas on the tenth level have the limitless wisdom, limitless compassion and limitless activity of a buddha. Not a single sentient being is excluded from the wisdom and compassion of a buddha.

'Buddha' [sangs rgyas] means that the obscuration of afflictions and the obscuration of cognition have both been completely 'purified' or 'removed' [sangs], and all wisdom qualities 'unfolded' [rgyas]. One aspect of the term 'bodhi' denotes absence [med pa], the absence of all that must be overcome. Another aspect of the term 'bodhi' denotes presence [yod pa], the presence of all that should be achieved and realized. 'Bodhi' and 'buddha' are both names for the final goal, the ultimate fruition, the aim we wish to achieve, the state of a completely enlightened buddha. Never think that the Buddha is a person [gang zag], a god [lha chen], a creator [byed pa po], or atma [bdag], a cosmic soul.

Buddha is immeasurable wisdom [tshad med pa'i ye shes]. At this very instant, within limitless space, there are countless world systems, where countless beings are becoming bodhisattvas, and countless bodhisattvas are reaching complete and perfect

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134 *mkhas 'jug* page 334 and 335. For more details see chapter one, Khenpo Chöga's commentary to text section 165-166.

enlightenment. On the absolute level [don dam] all buddhas are one in essence. On the relative level, in the perception of sentient beings, they appear individually distinct, in the same way that one sky can be reflected individually in countless water bowls.

One Buddha has the activity field of one billion world systems ['jig rten bye ba phrag brgya] because the beings in all these systems have accumulated a similar common karma [thun mong gi las] and therefore share similar perceptions. The Buddha appears to us as Buddha Śākyamuni, as a phenomenal perception [snang ba]. But the basis of that perception [snang gzhi] is the dharmakāya [chos sku]. The actual Buddha is the dharmakāya. The saṃbhogakāya [longs sku] and the nirmāṇakāya [sprul sku] only appear in the perception of others [gzhan snang] and are not the actual Buddha. Buddha's dharmakāya is limitless wisdom, limitless compassion and limitless activity. But his two form bodies [gzugs sku], the saṃbhogakāya [longs sku] and the nirmāṇakāya [sprul sku], appear only to the beings in a limited number of world systems, that is, only in one billion world systems. Buddha's two form bodies appear to beings of different degrees of merit and pure perception.

When Buddha was teaching at King Indrabhuti's palace in Uddiyana, his nirmāṇakāya manifestation appeared to the śrāvaka arhats [nyan thos dgra bcom pa] and pratyekabuddhas [rang sangs rgyas] who were present. Simultaneously he appeared to the bodhisattvas and great yogins in his saṃbhogakāya form, ornamented with the full saṃbhogakāya attire. At the same time he was giving Hīnayāna teachings to the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, he was also imparting Vajrayāna teachings and empowerments to the king and his entourage.

All citizens of King Indrabhuti's capital practiced Vajrayāna. Each citizen had a certain position in the maṇḍala [dkyil 'khor]. Finally, after eight years of practice, the entire city flew up into the sky. Therefore, the area received the name Uḍḍiyāna which means 'area of those who fly' ['phur 'gro'i gnas].

The saṃbhogakāya manifestations are perceived by the bodhisattvas who dwell on any of the ten bodhisattva levels, from the first to the tenth. Each bodhisattva level perceives Buddha's saṃbhogakāya manifestations differently. The perception of the various bodhisattva levels differs in clarity [gsal po], vastness [rgyas pa], and purity [dag pa]. In the same way, the nirmāṇakāya manifestations of the Buddha are perceived differently by a pratyekabuddha, an arhat or an ordinary being.

Swift enlightenment in Vajrayāna is possible if a student has the pure perception to see his root guru as the dharmakāya of the Buddha. A student of lesser merit might perceive the same root guru as a great master or scholar. An ordinary being might perceive the very same root guru merely as a nice old man. A negative-minded person might perceive the same root guru as his enemy. A buddha appears in a pure or impure aspect due to the pure or impure perception of sentient beings. The terms 'pure' and 'impure' apply not to the Buddha himself but to the different perceptions of his manifestations by sentient beings.

Text sections 200-203

Second, the three precepts concerning obligations are: (1) Having taken refuge in the Buddha, honor and respect any representation of the Buddha's body and mind, even if it is only a tiny piece of a broken terracotta image. Raise it above your head, put it somewhere clean, have faith and perceive it with pure vision, considering it to be the true jewel of the Buddha. Treat every statue of the Buddha, whether or not it is artistically appealing, with respect.

(2) Having taken refuge in the dharma, respect any representation of Buddha's speech, even if it is just a fragment of paper bearing a single syllable of the scriptures. Place it above your head, and consider it to be the true jewel of the dharma. Treat all dharma books with respect, and do not criticize them. Do not throw old dharma books or translations into the garbage, but instead burn them. Never put Buddhist scriptures or texts on the ground, never step over them, never put dirty objects on top of them or even pass dirty things over them. Never stain them. This is very important to observe.

To place books containing the scriptures directly on the floor or on a chair, to step over them, to wet your fingers with saliva to turn the pages and similar disrespectful behavior are all serious mistakes. The Buddha himself said:

> In the last five-hundred-year cycle,
> I will be present in the form of scriptures.
> Consider them as identical to me,
> And show them due respect.

In the same way as the Buddha manifests in the form of scriptures, the Great Mother Prajñāpāramitā [yum chen mo shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa] is said to be present in the form of the gaṇḍhi, a wooden gong used to summon monks. The gaṇḍhi symbolizes [mtshon byed] Prajñāpāramitā and the vinaya describes in great detail the shape and use of the gaṇḍhi. Since the Buddha appears in the form of scripture one should show the same respect to the Buddhist scriptures as one would to the Buddha in person.

Furthermore, do not put images on top of scriptures. The scriptures represent the Buddha's speech, teaching us what to do and what to avoid, and ensuring the continuity of his teachings. The scriptures are no different from the Buddha himself and are particularly sacred because they teach us the entire dharma. Therefore, treat with respect every dharma book written in any language.

(3) Having taken refuge in the saṃgha, consider anything that symbolizes it, be it the yellow belt of a fully ordained monk or a mere patch of red or yellow cloth, as the true jewel of the saṃgha. Honor and respect it, raise it above your head, put it somewhere clean, and regard it with pure vision. Treat all those who are pure monks, who endeavor in the precepts and uphold the sūtra-pitaka, vinaya-pitaka and abhidharma-pitaka, with respect. Even impure beings who just wear monks robes must be treated with respect. As it is said:

> In the future, when the teaching of the Buddha will decline,
> All little pieces of red or yellow cloth

Will be collected by the gods and taken away as objects of faith
And will be placed in a stūpa on the peak of Mount Sumeru.

Text sections 204-205:

Third, the three supplementary precepts are: (1) Look upon your teacher, the spiritual friend who teaches you here and now what to do and what not to do, as the true jewel of the Buddha. Endeavor to serve and honor him and do not even so much as walk on his shadow.

(2) Consider every word of your sublime teacher as the jewel of the dharma. Accept everything he says without disobeying a single point.

(3) Consider the entourage of your sublime teacher, his disciples and your spiritual companions who have pure conduct as the jewel of the saṃgha. Respect them with your body, speech and mind, and never upset them, even for an instant.

These abovementioned precepts come into play only after a student has firmly committed himself and been accepted by a Buddhist teacher. Before committing yourself to a teacher-student relationship, you must study about the qualities of an authentic Buddhist teacher.[135] You should check whether your prospective teacher embodies these qualities.

Particularly in the Secret Mantra Vehicle, your root guru is the main refuge—his body is the saṃgha, his speech the dharma, and his mind the Buddha. Recognize him, therefore, as the quintessential union of the three jewels, and see all his actions as perfect. Follow him with absolute trust, and try to pray to him all the time. Remember that to displease him with anything you do, say or think is to renounce the entire refuge, so make every effort to please him all the time.[136] Just before passing away, the Buddha told Ānanda:

Do not feel sad, Ānanda.
Do not lament, Ānanda.
In future times I will
Incarnate as spiritual guides
To help you and others.

Text section 206:

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[135] See chapter one, text section 106.

[136] The scriptures say that one should offer the three delights [mnyes pa gsum] to one's Vajrayāna master. The supreme way to delight your master is through practicing meditation [sgrub pas mnyes par byed pa]. The second best way to delight your master is by serving him with body and speech [lus ngag gis zhabs tog]; and last, to delight him through material offerings [zang zing gi mchod pa].

The five common trainings [thun mong gi bslab bya lnga] as taught by Lord Atiśa and put into poetry by Ngari Panchen are:

1. *Never forsake the three jewels, not for gifts and not at the cost of your life* [srog dang bya dkar dkon mchog gsum mi spong]: Whatever happens, good or bad, never forget to take refuge in the three jewels. Train yourself until you reach the point that even while feeling afraid in a nightmare you remember to take refuge. This will enable you to do so later in the intermediate state (Bardo). In short, place your entire trust in the three jewels, and never give up the refuge even at the cost of your life.

Once, in India, a Buddhist lay practitioner was taken prisoner by some tīrtikas, who told him, "If you renounce taking refuge in the three jewels, we won't kill you. Otherwise, we'll put you to death." He replied, "I can only renounce taking refuge with my mouth. I could never do so with my heart." The heretics sliced the skin on his head with a knife in several portions. While peeling off each slice they asked him, "Do you renounce?", and his reply was always "No". Finally, they killed him. We should really be like this layman. So, from the moment you enter the path of liberation and become a Buddhist, practice the taking of refuge along with its precepts, and never give them up even if your life is at stake.

2. *However pressing the need, I will not seek any other means* (than the three jewels) [dgos gal che yang thabs gzhan mi 'tshol]: No matter what happens to you, be it pleasant or unpleasant, good or bad, sickness or suffering, entrust yourself entirely to the three jewels. Recognize all well-being as springing from the compassion of the three jewels. It is said that everything pleasant and good in this world—even the slightest breeze on a hot day—comes from the compassion and blessings of the Buddha. In the same way, the smallest positive thought arising in your mind results from the inconceivable power of his blessings. Recognize Buddha's compassion in everything that helps you and makes you happy. Whenever you encounter sickness or suffering, when demons and enemies create obstacles, or whatever else may befall you, just pray to the three jewels, and do not rely on any other methods of dealing with such problems. If you have to undergo medical treatment or make use of a healing ritual, do so in the recognition that those very things are the activity of the three jewels.

3. *Do not fail to make offerings at the correct times* [dus mchod mi bcag]: Make offerings to the three jewels as often as you can, every morning and evening, and offer as much as you can. This is especially important on certain days: the eighth day of every lunar month, the days of the full moon and new moon, and summer and winter solstices, which are all days that naturally have great energy [nus pa chen po'i dus]. On these days afflictions as well as positive energy are naturally enhanced. Therefore, it is important to practice and make offerings on these days. The tenth and the twenty-fifth day of the lunar month are special tantra days.

Observe the special times dedicated to the three jewels and to the life of the Buddha such as the four great festival days [dus chen] according to the Tibetan calendar. These are the following:

1) 'The Festival of the Miracles' [cho 'phrul dus chen]: The first to the fifteenth day of the first Tibetan month commemorates the time when Buddha performed miracles. In order to increase the merit and to enhance the devotion of future disciples, Buddha displayed a different miracle each day for fifteen days. The fifteenth day is considered the actual festival day. The whole month is called 'Bumgyur Dawa' ['bum 'gyur zla ba], the month in which the results of all virtuous and non-virtuous activities are multiplied by a hundred thousand.

2) 'Saga Dawa Düchen' [sa ga zla ba dus chen]: The fifteenth day of the fourth Tibetan month commemorates Buddha's birth in Lumbini, his enlightenment at age 35 at Bodhgayā, and his passing into parinirvāṇa at Kuśinagara at the age of 80.[137]

3) 'The Festival of the First Turning' [chos 'khor dus chen]: The fourth day of the sixth Tibetan month commemorates the first turning of the wheel of dharma. For seven weeks following his enlightenment, Buddha did not teach. Finally, encouraged by Indra and Brahma, he turned the wheel of dharma for the first time at Sarnath by teaching the four noble truths.

4) 'The Festival of his Descent from Heaven' [lha babs dus chen]: The twenty-second day of the ninth Tibetan month commemorates Buddha's descent from the heaven of the thirty-three [skr. trayastriṃśa]. Buddha's mother had been reborn in Indra's heaven. He repaid her kindness by leading her to liberation. At the same time, to benefit the other gods Buddha spent three months teaching in the realm of the gods before descending once more to earth.

All good and desirable circumstances in this life—comfort, happiness, popularity, profit or whatever—spring from the compassion of the three jewels. With such devotion and pure perception think, "I offer all this to them." Offer the three jewels whatever sources of merit you create—prostrations, offerings, meditation on the Buddha, recitation of mantra and so on—and dedicate that merit to the benefit of all beings.

4. *Establish yourself and others in refuge* [rang gzhan skyabs 'gror 'god]: Once you have understood the benefits and blessings of taking refuge, you will become an example for others. When asked, explain to others the qualities of the three jewels and thus encourage them to take refuge. Entrust yourself and others to the three jewels both for this life and for lives to come, and practice refuge diligently.

You may relate to those who are close to you the feelings of devotion, happiness, certainty and so forth that the three jewels inspire in your mind. Your inspiration can inspire others. However, it is crucial to talk about the dharma and about going for refuge only when an auspicious connection [rten 'brel] to discuss the dharma has naturally arisen. Do not seek to create situations in order to proselytize. Even if you give advice and offer help, always let people decide for themselves whether or not they want to go for refuge or not.

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137 See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 478; *History of Buddhism*, page 65-66.

You may talk to people who are interested and those who are neutral to the dharma. But never talk about the dharma to people who have a negative attitude toward it. If you give them an opportunity to slander the three jewels, their negative attitude will cause them endless suffering in the lower realms of saṃsāra.

An auspicious connection is a circumstance that is not manipulated but that occurs naturally. An auspicious connection is uncontrived. What is uncontrived is natural. What is natural is endowed with the spontaneous and inconceivable power of the natural state [rten 'brel zhes pa ni ma bcos pa red, ma bcos pa ni rang bzhin red. rang bzhin la chos nyid gyi nus pa bsam gyis mi khyab pa lhun gyis grub pa yod do].

5. *Wherever I go, I will prostrate to the Buddha of that direction* [gar 'gro'i phyogs kyi sangs rgyas la phyag 'tshal]: Learn to have faith and pure perception by recognizing everything that appears as being manifested by the three jewels. Whenever you go somewhere, on the way pay homage to the Buddha of that direction. Make the refuge prayer your constant daily practice. If you do not know any in particular recite the four-fold refuge prayer, which is common to all vehicles of Tibetan Buddhism:

> Homage to the teacher.
> Homage to the Buddha.
> Homage to the dharma.
> Homage to the saṃgha.

Or you may recite the four-fold refuge in Sanskrit:

> Namo guru bhya
> Namo buddhaya
> Namo dharmaya
> Namo saṃghaya

While reciting these lines of refuge, visualize Buddha Śākyamuni in the sky in front of you. You may follow the visualization taught in Mipham Rinpoche's[138] text "The Liturgy of Śākyamuni—A Treasury of Blessings." When you go to sleep, visualize the Buddha in your heart, and fall asleep with your mind concentrated on him. If you cannot do that, think of your teacher and the three jewels as being really present by your pillow, full of love and compassion for you. Then fall asleep with faith and pure perception, without losing the thought of the three jewels.

When eating or drinking, visualize the three jewels in your throat, and offer them the first taste of everything you consume. If you cannot do that, offer them the first mouthful or sip, thinking, "I offer this to the three jewels."

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138 See appendix for English translation of The Liturgy of Śākyamuni—A Treasury of Blessings [thub chog byin rlabs gter mdzod].

When you have new clothes to wear, before putting them on for the first time, lift them up and offer them mentally to the three jewels. Then put them on with the thought that the three jewels have given them to you.

Whenever you see anything that gives you joy or that you find desirable, offer it mentally to the precious three jewels: lovely gardens full of flowers, streams of clear water, beautiful houses, pleasant groves, vast wealth and possessions, beautiful men and women in fine clothes—anything.

When drawing water, make an offering to the three jewels by flicking a few drops into the air with your fingers before pouring it into your container.

Text sections 207-209:

Taking refuge has innumerable and inconceivable benefits. The *Vimaladatta-paripṛcchā-sūtra* says:

> If all the merit of taking refuge
> Had a physical form,
> The whole of space
> Would not be large enough to contain it.

Khenpo Kunpal has already mentioned several qualities and benefits of going for refuge in text sections 141 through 148. Further benefits can also be elaborated upon. One benefit of going for refuge is that you will not take rebirth in any of the three lower realms. To take refuge with a faith fully cognizant of the qualities of the three jewels unquestionably brings benefit. But even simply hearing the word "Buddha" or creating any link, tenuous as it may be, with any representation of the Buddha's body, speech or mind can plant the seed of liberation, which ultimately will lead to the state beyond suffering.

Taking refuge also distances one from masses of negativity and increases virtue. By taking refuge you distance yourself from all negative actions and purify your fomerly accumulated karmic obscurations. Even the most negative actions accumulated in the past are reduced and exhausted by going for refuge with sincere and intense faith. From the moment of going for refuge onward, the compassionate blessings of the three jewels will render all your thoughts positive until you naturally avoid all negativity.

Going for refuge temporarily secures the protection of beneficent deities and the realization of all one's wishes. Moreover, obstacles caused by humans, demons and spirits cannot affect you. Practitioners who meditate on the profound meaning of the dharma can encounter many obstacles to their practice. But making a real effort to sincerely take refuge will transform all obstacles into favorable circumstances, and your merit will grow unceasingly.

The permanent benefit of going for refuge is that you will never part company from the thought of the three jewels, and you will find happiness and well-being both in this

present life and in lives to come. Ultimately, you will obtain the state of buddhahood; swiftly perfecting the two accumulations you will attain enlightenment.

Text section 210:

When you present offerings, offer all the positive things you hold in your mind. Now, in confession, lay open all the negative things that you have been holding in your mind. Never offer your negativity to the buddhas, but confess it. To confess [bshags pa] means 'to cut off' [mar gtub / mar gcad] or 'to throw away' [phar yug]. You can cut off or throw away all your misdeeds. It also connotes 'to lay open', 'to lay bare' or 'to open up' [kha phye ba]. Therefore, the phrase 'to confess openly' [mthol lo bshags] means 'to lay open' [mthol ba] and 'to lay aside' [bshags pa].

Confession should be understood like this: "I truly acknowledge that, being mistaken, I did something wrong. Now I will rectify my mistakes. I will purify myself and remove what is hidden inside." Confess with a mindset of regret or repentance ['gyod pa / sun 'byin pa] about what you have done wrong coupled with the resolve to purify your former misdeeds.

In the sūtra tradition, to purify your misdeeds you visualize light radiating from the buddhas and bodhisattvas. In the tantra tradition, you visualize nectar dripping down from Vajrasattva. You acknowledge and regret all your misdeeds, deciding to purify them. You make the further resolve not to repeat the same mistakes in the future and not to stain your mind again.

At the outset, you must be able to identify a mistake or misdeed. You need to learn what constitutes virtuous and non-virtuous conduct. You need to learn that when you live your life according to the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu], you will create good karma, and you need to learn that committing the ten non-virtuous actions will lead to terrible results in this and future lifetimes for yourself and others.

You next try to remember all the misdeeds you have committed in this life. Although you cannot recollect your past lives, trust in the teachings of the Buddha who said that we have all taken rebirth in countless previous lifetimes in all possible states of existence. It is said that there is not even a single square inch of ground in all higher and lower realms that you have not stepped on in former lifetimes. With such a personal history you can deduce that you have committed all possible negative deeds and still carry these karmic seeds in your mind. We all have a tremendous amount of not yet ripened previous karma lying dormant in our mind-streams. Therefore, acknowledging all possible misdeeds done in this and previous lifetimes is crucial.

Acknowledge all negative deeds you can remember as well as those you cannot. Develop a feeling of deep regret and shame for what you have done. Feel so ashamed that you really want to rid yourself of the disgraceful deeds you committed in the past. Such shame and regret along with the fear of the dire consequences of your misdeeds will lead to a firm resolve never to repeat these misdeeds in the future. All the ingredients of acknowledgement, shame, regret and fear of karmic consequences are indispensible for a fully effective confession.

Many people do not know the difference between right and wrong. In east Tibet, for example, where long-standing family feuds are frequent, it is common to think: "I've done quite well in killing that enemy of mine. I've done the right thing." Here, people who have taken the life of another human being think they have accomplished something wonderful. They actually feel happy and satisfied about their misdeeds. Such killing coupled with rejoicing in it is an enormously negative act, a grave negativity [sdig pa chen po].

Wrongdoing means harming others due to one's own ignorance, aggression, desire, jealousy and miserliness. In fact, every time you harm someone else, you harm yourself. In order to prevent the consequences of your deeds from coming back to you, you must confess the harm that you have inflicted on others.

Do not, however, let confession develop into worrying [sems brel]. Practice confession as a 'cutting off' [mar bshags]. In one moment cut off all your negative patterns of the past and firmly resolve not to repeat them again. Do not hold on to regret continuously. Face the problem of your previous negativity, and apply the solution, the firm resolve not to repeat these actions in the future.

Text section 211 / stanza 27:

Stanza 27 describes the visualization of the objects for confession [bshags yul mngon du bya ba]. To make confession requires an object before which to confess. In the sūtra tradition, these objects are the buddhas and bodhisattvas dwelling in countless buddha fields throughout the ten directions, who are all endowed with great compassion and wish to liberate all sentient beings from suffering and its causes. In the tantra tradition, the object is your own root guru in the form of Vajrasattva.

Involve your body, speech and mind in the practice of confession. With your mind generate faith [dad pa] and devotion [mos gus] toward the objects of confession [bshags yul]. Imagine that they are truly present in the sky in front of you. Develop heartfelt regret for all of your previously committed misdeeds and negative actions. With your body assume the posture of devotion by joining your palms together in the anjali mudra. With your voice recite the words of your confession practice in a pleasant and melodious way.

Text sections 212:

An effective confession requires four powers [stobs bzhi]: 1) The power of remorse [sun 'byin pa'i stobs], also called the power of regret ['gyod pa'i stobs]; 2) the power of the support [rten gyi stobs]; 3) the power of the applied antidote [gnyen po kun tu spyod pa'i stobs]; and 4) the power of resolve [sor chud pa'i stobs],[139] also called the power of commitment [sdom pa'i stobs] or the power of turning away from mistakes [nyes pa las ldog pa'i stobs].

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[139] This term may also be translated as 'the power of restoration' or 'the power of repair'.

The *power of remorse* is heartfelt regret about the non-virtuous deeds one has previously committed. Regret requires the knowledge [shes rab] of how to identify what virtue and non-virtue actually are. It further requires faith in karma, the law of cause and effect, and the wish to get rid of one's misdeeds because one does not want to suffer their horrible consequences. Stanzas 28 through 46 cover the power of remorse.

The *power of support* means going for refuge to the three jewels, the buddhas, the dharma and the saṃgha, as the object for purification [dag rten du byed pa]. Knowing that only the three jewels can grant protection from the fears of the three lower realms, you go for refuge. Stanzas 47 through 53 cover the power of support.

The *power of the applied antidote* means that from now on you endeavor constantly in virtuous activities [dge ba'i las la shin tu brtson pa]. Stanzas 54 through 65 (first half) cover the power of the applied antidote.

The *power of resolve* is the commitment [dam bca' ba] to abstain from this moment onward from all misdeeds, even at the cost of your life. Stanza 65 (second half) covers the power of resolve. The practice of confession is only effective if all four powers are complete.

Text section 213 / stanza 28:

In stanza 28 the practitioner develps remorse about the negative deeds he has committed over a very long timespan. The timespan includes the entire time one has been circling in saṃsāra. Since saṃsāra is beginningless, having no starting point, the timespan here is *throughout beginningless saṃsāra* [thog ma med ldan 'khor ba nas], lifetime after lifetime, i.e. this present lifetime and all previous lifetimes.

Ignorantly [ma 'tshal], without knowing [ma shes] the horrible karmic consequences of negative deeds, without knowing what to do and what to avoid, and being ignorant of karma, the law of cause and effect, one has committed various kinds of negative deeds. This refers to the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], the five crimes with immediate retribution [mtshams med lnga], and so forth.

The karma of negative deeds [sdig pa] is accumulated in three ways: 1) actually committing them oneself [rang gis dngos su bgyis pa], 2) inciting others to commit them [gzhan dag la bgyid du stsal ba], or 3) rejoicing in the negative deeds done by others [gzhan gyis sdig pa byas pa la rjes su yi rang ba]. These three have equally severe consequences.

The karma of virtuous deeds [dge ba] is also accumulated in three ways: 1) actually performing virtue oneself, 2) inspiring others to perform virtuous actions, or 3) rejoicing in the virtue performed by others. These are equally meritorious. Both virtue and negativity depend on our minds.

For instance, if you rejoice in the actions of Mao Tse-Tung or Adolf Hitler, who were responsible for the deaths of millions of people, you create the same karma as if you had committed these killings yourself. Similarly, if you rejoice in Buddha's setting the

wheel of dharma in motion, you create the same merit that Buddha created. Your mind is that powerful, and you can attract that much harm or virtue.

If one hundred people decide that a person should be killed, each of these hundred accumulates the same negative karma. It is not that the actual killer accumulates most of the negativity while the other ninety-nine people accumulate less. Therefore, you must recognize these three ways of committing negativity as mistakes [nyes pa mthong] and at all cost avoid them in the future.

The gravity of non-virtuous and virtuous deeds varies according to the following factors: their duration [dus], their causes [rgyu], the objects [yul] toward which they are directed, their basis [gzhi], their essence [ngo bo], their application [sbyor ba], and their effects [byed las].

The only good quality of a negative deed is that it can be purified through confession. All negative deeds and mistakes can be confessed and purified because they are concepts ['du shes] and thoughts [rnam rtog]. Even the most severe misdeeds such as the five crimes with immediate retribution can be purified.

Care must be taken, however, not to assume that confession alone is sufficient to purify all one's past negativity. Through confession you lay open and confess [mthol zhing bshags pa] all your negative deeds; you put these former evil thoughts out of your mind and resolve to never again repeat them. Making the firm resolve to abstain from repeating a negative deed at all costs in the future is the best and most powerful aspect of confession.

Text section 214 / stanza 29:

The way to confess [bshags tshul] your negative deeds is to develop a regretful mind ['gyod sems] and confess them from the bottom of your heart. Confess without concealing [mi 'chab] or hiding [mi sbed] anything; lay everything open in front of the objects of confession [bshags yul], the buddhas and bodhisattvas endowed with compassion. Knowing that the fruition of your negative deeds will ripen and cause you tremendous harm, recognize them as faults [nongs pa].

215-216 / stanza 30:

One can inflict harm on others with one's body, speech or mind. There are differences in the severity of a negative deed, depending on the sensitivity of the object. The most sensitive or perilous objects [yul gnyen po] are the three jewels. They are called 'a field of qualities' [yon tan can gyi zhing] since they are endowed with inconceivable qualities. The Vajrayāna root guru is considered to be identical with the Buddha and also belongs in the field of qualities.

Our parents constitute the most sensitive or perilous object after the three jewels. They are called 'a field of benefits' [phan 'dogs pa'i zhing] since they gave us life, nurtured us from early childhood onward, supplied us with clothing, shelter and education, thereby bestowing great benefits on us.

Our teachers [bla ma], such as khenpos [mkhan po] and masters [slob dpon], constitute the next most perilous object. They are called a 'field of kindness' [bka' drin gyi zhing] since they taught us reading and writing, gave us instructions in Buddhism, and bestowed the precepts of individual liberation and the bodhisattva precepts upon us. Our Mahāyāna sūtra teachers are considered to be similar to the Buddha and belong to the field of kindness.

To commit misdeeds against these objects, whether with body, speech or mind, is therefore a very grave mistake. The most grave mistake is to fight, beat, hit or destroy the three jewels—including the fourth jewel, the root guru—one's parents or one's teachers. Slandering or speaking badly about them is also a heavy mistake. Holding wrong views and harboring ill-will toward them, furthermore, has dire consequences. These grave misdeeds are the most important things to confess.

Harming the three jewels does not only mean destroying the three conventional worldly jewels ['jig rten kun rdzob kyi dkon mchog], such as statues [sku gzugs], dharma books [po ti], and an assembly of a minimum of four fully ordained monks [dge slong bzhi tshogs].[140] Even merely harboring harmful intentions or having wrong views about the three jewels are very grave misdeeds.

Actually, one should treat one's parents in the same way one would treat a king [rgyal po]. Especially concerning one's mother one should always give her the victory and take defeat and blame upon oneself. Besides the Buddha and one's root guru, the people who have extended us the greatest kindness really are our parents. We must therefore use all means to make them happy. Hitting one's parents, uttering harsh words to them, making them upset, giving them angry looks, displaying bad moods in their presence, ignoring them and the like have horrible karmic consequences. All these acts are severe misdeeds [sdig pa chen po].

Another important group of people who deserve special attention are all practitioners who dwell in samādhi, especially those who practice the meditation of kindness, and particularly, all who traverse the path of the bodhisattvas. Never inflict the slightest harm on any of these, neither physical harm nor verbal abuse. Do not even harbor any bad intentions toward them.

Furthermore, stealing the property of the three jewels is an extremely negative deed. Misappropriating devotional objects, statues and old scriptures from monasteries and selling them is a severe fault. Inciting others to steal such objects as well as selling devotional objects that have been stolen both constitute extremely grave non-virtuous actions. On the contrary, making statues or printing texts carries great virtue and merit. An artist or printer of texts may distribute these freely or charge an appropriate amount without accumulating any negative karma.

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140 One speaks of 'a saṃgha group' or 'a saṃgha gathering' [dge 'dun gyi sde] when a minimum of four monks who are in possession of the bhikṣu precepts stay together at the same place and time.

Text section 217:

The story of Kyer-Gang-Pa suffering from tiny letter A's piecing his skin because he accepted money to recite Buddhist scriptures but failed to recite them teaches that he had to experience the karmic consequences of his negative action even after becoming a siddha.

Text section 218:

One of the worst misdeeds anyone can commit, which is almost beyond purification through confession, is misappropriating the 'property of the saṃgha' [dge 'dun pa'i dkor]. The property of the saṃgha of the ten directions refers to the 'general property' of all the saṃgha members, wherever they may be as well as to general offerings made to the monastery. While mishandling these offerings is a grave offence, an even greater fault is the mishandling of offerings presented directly to the saṃgha. Offerings that sponsors have given particularly for monks must be directly passed on to them. The monastery is not allowed to keep any portion of such offerings. The monastery treasurer must use the money exactly according to the sponsor's instructions. For example, he cannot use money intended for the monks to carry out monastery construction work; nor can he use money intended for construction to buy food for the monks.

In short, one who steals, robs, does business with or takes with deceit even the smallest items which belong to the saṃgha will certainly take rebirth in hell since such a deed cannot be purified through confession. This is clearly stated in the sūtras. Stealing from the saṃgha is a graver misdeed than violating one's Vajrayāna samayas. One must exercise such extreme care that the very same coins and bank notes that the sponsor gave for the monks are directly passed on to them without even changing the coins or notes into other denominations.

The nomads in Tibet used dried yak dung to make a fire. When they camped near a monastery, they would take a piece of yak dung to light at the fire of the monastery's kitchen. After they had started their own fire, they always returned a piece of yak dung to the monastery to replace the fire flame they had borrowed. When you take even a little thing from a monastery you must replace it right away or you will suffer karmic consequences. Furthermore, you should never use any possessions belonging to the saṃgha.

Text section 219:

Moreover, many stories recount how people who broke in anger a clay cooking pot [phru ba] that belonged to the saṃgha took rebirth in a clay-pot-like hell. In general, Buddha said that something that is given to the upper temple should not be used for the lower temple and vice versa. The summer earnings of the saṃgha should not be distributed during the winter; nor should the winter earnings be handed out during the summer. What was given today should not be handed out tomorrow. When the

sponsor says that a donation should be given to the saṃgha on this very day, the treasurer must not give the donation to the saṃgha even a day later.

Text section 220:

Spitting at or smearing mucus on the walls or pillars of the temple hall of the saṃgha [dge ’dun gyi ’du khang] is absolutely not appropriate and will result in rebirth in a wall or pillar-like hell realm. Never stain a temple, the living quarters of the monks, or any part of a monastery.

Again, Khenpo Kunpal reiterates the injunction against using any saṃgha property, not even a dustbin or a broom, as this leads to rebirth in a dustbin or broom-like hell realm. Distributing the earnings of the saṃgha during the wrong season causes rebirth as an insect with a very thin waist. Street dogs with horrible skin diseases are said to be the rebirth of people who misused saṃgha property or of those government officials who mishandled public funds.

Many monks in the past gave back their vows to the Buddha, meaning they gave up their vows, as they did not want to create the bad karma of living off monastic property without being worthy of it. When they told the Buddha that they did not want to be monks any longer as they felt they could not handle monastic property without creating bad karma, Buddha honored their decision and praised them for acting very properly.

The true owners of monastic property [dkor gyi bdag po] are arhats, pratyekabuddhas and the perfectly enlightened Buddha, those who have attained the path of no-more-learning [mi slob pa’i lam]. All who have attained the path of seeing [mthong lam] and the path of meditation [sgom lam], such as stream-enterers, once-returners and non-returners are the true recipients for gifts [yon yongs su sbyongs ba chen po].

Buddha also said that those who keep all their monastic vows intact, who sincerely study [thos], contemplate [bsam] and meditate [sgom], may also use gifts given to them as well as saṃgha property. But monks who do not maintain perfect discipline and do not study, contemplate or meditate should never use monastic property or receive gifts given to the saṃgha.

Those monks who are on the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] and the path of application [sbyor lam] are still ordinary beings [so so’i skye bo]. They include the following: those who follow the tradition of reading, studying and reflecting on the teachings [klog pa thos bsam gyi ’khor lo], those who follow the tradition of practicing meditation and renunciation in solitude [spong ba bsam gtan gyi ’khor lo], and those who follow the tradition of working for the dharma [bya ba las kyi ’khor lo]. All monks following one of these three traditions [’khor lo rnam gsum] have permission to receive gifts.

The noble saṃgha is able to receive any kind of offering and remain uncorrupted. But someone who receives offerings on the pretence of being a monk or an exalted being will be corrupted by accepting the offerings. To be a proper recipient of offerings one

should at least be perfect in discipline [tshul khrims phun sum tshogs pa] or dwell in the practice of the two stages, visualization stage and completion stage.

Someone who does not fit into either of these categories but accepts offerings under the guise of being qualified to receive them will accumulate great demerit. The unjust receipt of gifts, possessions and property of the saṃgha is almost impossible to purify through confession.

Thus, it is said that what has been given to the saṃgha is like poison when misused. Even a lama or rinpoche who heads a monastery must be extremely conscientious about handling donations given for the monks. All such donations must be distributed immediately, or the lama or rinpoche will suffer dire consequences. The lama or rinpoche may use donations given for his own use or for work he himself is to perform, or that are given to him personally simply out of devotion, with no negative consequences. But if a sponsor designates money for the monastery or for the saṃgha, or if he gives money for rituals to be performed by the saṃgha, then that donation is considered the 'heavy' property of the saṃgha [dge 'dun gyi dkor nag po] and should never by used by the lama or rinpoche in any other way. Such an offering does not belong to him but to the saṃgha. In this situation, the lama is functioning as the monastery treasurer. His duty is to pass such donations on immediately.

Text sections 217 to 241 contain many stories describing the dire karmic consequences of misappropriating monastic property.

Text section 242:

Khenpo Kunpal probably put these stories in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra commentary with managers of monasteries who misused donations in mind. Nevertheless, whenever we as ordinary practitioners stay in a monastery, we must be very careful about how we act. Living as a servant of a lama or as a serious practitioner in a monastery, one is allowed to receive monastic food and use monastery facilities. But if someone just lives on monastic property without serving any real function or without compensating the monastery for room and board, using monastic facilities and eating monastic food is like eating poison.

A slight misuse of monastic property might seem very insignificant, an action not even punishable according to the law of the country. However, the rules and regulations for the monks cannot be compared to the laws and customs of a country. All rules for monks and nuns were formulated by the Buddha, who alone knew the workings of karma completely.

It is said: "A cause as tiny as a sesame seed can have a result as huge as Mount Sumeru." We have committed many mistakes [nyes pa] and negative deeds in the past, and we carry these in our minds as seeds which will inevitably ripen one day, like a disease lying dormant in our body. When our negative deeds ripen and manifest, we inevitably take rebirth in the hell realms. In order to remove these causes and consequences, these dormant seeds and their ripening, we confess to the buddhas and bodhisattvas all our negative deeds one by one and openly, hiding nothing.

Big monasteries in east Tibet had a separate residence for each important lama with its own treasurer and managers. The 'treasurer' or 'general office manager' [phyag mdzod] is the person in charge of the finances of one lama's residence [bla brang]. In Tibetan monasteries the general manager is often a lay person [mi skya]. The person responsible for buying and storing food and provisions for all the monks in one lama's residence is called 'the larder manager' [gnyer pa / spyi khag]. In east Tibet, this person is normally appointed or elected to his post for five years. The posts of treasurer and larder manager are the most powerful positions in a monastery. Every important lama also has a private secretary [drung yig]. The person in charge of butter lamps in a temple hall is called the 'temple servant' [dkon gnyer].

Any negativity committed toward Buddha must be confessed and amended directly to Buddha himself. Someone who has committed any negativity toward the dharma, should reprint many volumes of dharma books. A student who has spoken badly about his teacher should confess and amend this wrongdoing directly to his teacher. Someone who has committed any of the above misdeeds in regard to the saṃgha should offer confessions and make many offerings to the saṃgha itself. Negative deeds toward your parents must be confessed and amended directly with them.

Text section 243 / stanza 31:

Since we sentient beings are under the power of ignorance [ma rig pa], we commit errors [nor ba]. We can, however, confess our errors and mistakes. For as long as we allow negative deeds to remain in our minds their consequences will harm us. Confession enables us to remove our former misdeeds, and the sooner we eliminate them through confession the better.

Regret ['gyod sems] is an aspect of wisdom-knowledge [shes rab], the ability to identify one's wrongdoings [nor ba ngos 'dzin pa] coupled with the wish to get rid of them. The moment one realizes one is eating poison, one immediately stops eating it and tries to get it out of the system. As long as we cannot identify negative deeds for what they are, confession is not possible. As long as we cannot identify a substance as poison we continue to eat it. Therefore, we must learn that the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge bcu], the five crimes with immediate rebribution [mtshams med lnga], and so forth are negative deeds with horrible karmic consequences, which will destroy our happiness like rust corrodes iron.

A mind filled with negativity is like a mind consumed by fire. At some point in time one will become aware of one's wrongdoings and will develop a strong feeling of guilt. The thought,"I have done wrong" [nga bya ba ngan pa byas song] will stay in your mind like a heavy weight [lci ba]. You will no longer be able to rejoice in your negative actions. You will lose respect for yourself, becoming unhappy and dissatisfied. Losing confidence in yourself, you will no longer be able to look at yourself without feeling disgust.

Without knowing how to remedy their evil deeds, some people fall into such a state of despair that they see no alternative other than suicide. This state of mind, called 'guilt-

ridden', is very different from what is called 'regret' ['gyod sems]. Regret arises from wisdom-knowledge and is the ability to identify one's wrongdoings coupled with the wish to get rid of them. Knowing that the mind-stream can be purified through the method of sincere confession, the feeling of guilt does not overpower the mind.

Visualize the buddhas and bodhisattvas before you in the sky. Bring to mind your misdeeds and declare them aloud, confessing them to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Going down on your knees, placing your hands on the ground, and touching your forehead to the ground is a very effective way to offer confessions. Do not dwell too long on regret over your past negative actions. Dedicate short but repeated periods of time to developing regret, but do not let your practice of confession slip into a mind filled with worry [sems brel] and guilt. Purify your mind through short practice periods of sincere confession. Confession removes both the misdeed and its karmic consequences.

Anger [zhe sdang] leads to rebirth in the hell realms; ignorance [gti mug] to rebirth in the animal realm; and miserliness [ser sna] to rebirth in the preta realm. Pride [nga rgyal] is the cause for rebirth in the god realm; jealousy [phrag dog] for rebirth in the asura realm; and desire ['dod chags] for rebirth in the human realm.

Clinging to the stains of various misdeeds [nyes pa du mas skyon chags pa] in our minds, means that just as rust clings to iron, motivated by these afflictions, we have committed innumerable wicked deeds with our body, speech and mind. We have created the causes [rgyu] for taking rebirth in saṃsāra, and have caused obstacles for the path to liberation. We confess before the compassionate *guides* ['dren pa thugs rje can], the buddhas and bodhisattvas, who lead all those who have committed *the most intolerable acts* [shin tu mi bzad pa'i las bgyis pa de dag thams cad] out of the three lower realms of saṃsāra into the three higher realms and to liberation.

Text section 244 / stanza 32:

Do not die before offering sincere confessions to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Trust in your ability to purify your negative deeds through confession. All the abovementioned negative deeds bear horrible karmic consequences, and must be confessed quickly since we cannot know when death will come. We may even die this very day. We have seen many people die young; we have seen many people of our own age die suddenly. Why should death not come to us as well?

We experience *the suffering of being cut off from life at the moment of death* ['chi kha gnad gcod kyi sdug bsngal]. While dying we will experience great fear, pain or sickness. We will feel our life draining out as the elements dissolve one after another ['byung ba thim rim]. When the earth element dissolves into earth, the heaviness of the body impairs one's ability to raise oneself. The power to stand up and move is exhausted. When the water element dissolves into water, fluids issue from the mouth and nostrils. When the fire element dissolves into fire, the mouth and nose become extremely dry. The body loses heat from the extremities inward. When the wind element dissolves into the vital energy, the breath becomes erratic, and the limbs struggle. The eyes roll back in the

head, and the breath does not return. These are the signs of a person dying. That stage in the process of death is called the 'bardo of the moment of death' ['chi kha bar do].

We will next experience *the suffering of the intermediate state after death* [shi nas bar do'i sdug bsngal]. When body and mind separate one enters into the 'bardo of the natural state' [chos nyid bar do]. The light manifestations of the peaceful and wrathful deities appear.

Following this, one enters into the 'bardo of existence' [srid pa bar do] where one travels in a mental body [yid kyi lus]. Propelled by previous karma, one is blown around like a feather in the wind. The mind finds no rest at all, and the thought, "I am dead," is a source of tremendous misery. Karma drives this mental body to the future place of rebirth.

Finally, we are forced to take rebirth and experience *the suffering of the three lower realms in the next life* [phyi ma ngan song gi sdug bsngal]. These various forms of suffering all arise from one's own negative deeds and non-virtuous actions. The countless evil deeds committed in past lifetimes will certainly ripen. That is the law of cause and effect.

At the moment of death all major deeds of our entire life flash through our mind. We will clearly remember the good and the bad things we have done. If we have committed great evil our minds will fall into a state of despair and regret that we never practiced dharma. Knowing that we will go to the lower realms leads to great fear.

One's state of mind at the moment of death is of utmost importance. A Buddhist practitioner who has purified his mind-stream throughout his life might die in a peaceful and virtuous state of mind or might even be able to recognize his buddha nature at the moment of death. That is a very peaceful way of dying. But even a Buddhist practitioner can die in a state of great physical pain or fear. In that case, completely entrusting your mind to Buddha or Guru Rinpoche rather than focusing on the fear and pain is of crucial importance.

A person who dies without having purified his negative deeds through confession will certainly take rebirth in the three lower realms and experience intense suffering. No matter what he does at the point of death, it will be difficult for him to be liberated with certainty [nges par], beyond any doubt [gdod mi za bar], from his negative deeds, the causes for taking rebirth in the three lower realms, and from their results, the experience of suffering in the three lower realms. What method can free him? It is too late and nothing can be done. He will have to experience the consequences of his negative deeds.

Therefore, as practitoners, we should begin the practice of confession immediately. Knowing now about the suffering of the three lower realms, we should immediately develop heartfelt regret ['gyod sems] about our former misdeeds. We should be frightened and go for refuge to the three jewels. We need to resolve to eliminate these negative deeds which are the causes for future suffering. This is like deciding no longer to associate with evil friends. In this way we must distance ourselves from our former negative patterns.

We need the mental resolve [sdom sems] to abstain from repeating these negative actions in the future. This is the power of resolve. As the remedy [gnyen po] for our former negative actions, we need to endeavor tirelessly from now on in virtue. This is the power of the antidote.

Many people feel unable to firmly resolve to abstain from further wrong-doing. They think it will be impossible to keep this promise. Such thinking is disempowering. Confession is part of mind-training [blo sbyong], and you train in confession until you can do it. A practitioner must repeatedly renew the resolve to abstain from committing misdeeds in the future. Promise yourself, "I will no longer commit any non-virtuous actions." Through such repeated promises your mind will become strong and confident.

As a Buddhist you must assume responsibility for your own afflictions. Do not blame others to justify your negative actions. Thinking, "He treated me badly and therefore I hate him," does not save you from the consequences of your anger. Any affliction that arises in your mind is a fault [nor ba] whether or not there is a so-called justification. A Buddhist practitioner must guard his mind against the rise of afflictions. As a Buddhist, never allow your mind to generate non-virtue.

To summarize, the practice of confession has four steps: 1) Visualize the buddhas and bodhisattvas as the object to whom you offer confession [bshags pa'i rten]. 2) Bring to mind all your negative deeds. Acknowledge them for what they are, and develop the wish to rid yourself of that kind of karma. Develop a deep sense of regret ['gyod sems]. Keep nothing hidden in your mind. Bring everything out into the open and actually confess it. Assume a humble position with your body while confessing. 3) Form the strong resolve [sdom sems] to abstain from repeating non-virtuous deeds in the future, thereby completely distancing yourself from negativity. 4) Finally, apply the antidote of virtuous deeds [gnyen po dge ba'i las]. From now on infuse your mind with goodness. Virtue and goodness have a great healing qualities. Generate the confidence that your negative deeds have now been purified.

Text sections 245-246 / stanza 33:

You might think that although you will die some day, right now you have no time to make confessions. Actually, however, you have no way of knowing when you are going to die. Be aware that all the conditions for your immediate death have already come together. There are many circumstances that could cause your death at any given time. The Māra of Death ['chi bdag gi bdud] could arrive any moment. He will not listen if you plead with him to wait because you have not finished this or that job or have not yet made your confessions. Whether or not you have confessed, whether or not you are sick, the time of your death is utterly uncertain. Therefore, *put no trust* [yid mi brtan] *in this fleeting life* [glo bur ba'i tshe]. Start immediately to free yourself from all past evil deeds through confession. Then you will have no suffering in the future.

The Māra of Death is impermanence [mi rtag pa] or time [dus]. The Māra of Death is also called 'the enemy as time' [dus dgra]. Impermanence does not halt for even a

second. No matter what crucial work lies ahead of you waiting to be completed, impermanence will not halt for this task to be carried out. Death can strike at any time. You do not know the circumstances of your death—when, where or how you will die. You might die even today. Start your confession right now.

The quote, "Many a healthy person dies during the lifespan (remaining to) someone who is terminally ill,[141]" indicates the uncertainty of life [tshe la nges pa med pa], even for one in perfect health. For example, someone with terminal cancer knows he will die soon. But while he lies ill, many healthy people die who have no fatal sicknesses. Not only the sick and old die. The young and healthy die as well. Life is as fleeting as a candle in the wind or a sunbeam that breaks through the clouds. Therefore, practice confession as soon as possible.

Text section 247:

Nāgārjuna in his *Suhṛl-lekha* [spring yig] compares the fleeting conditions of this life to a wind-blown water bubble. The odds of dying are much greater than the odds of continuing to live. He is astounded that life continues from one breath to the next and finds it utterly surprising that one still awakens from sleep. Every morning when we wake up, like Nāgārjuna we should feel surprised that we are still alive. We should meditate with joy and gratitude that we have maybe one more day to practice the dharma. Think, "Through the blessing of the Buddha, through the power of my former virtue, I might have one more day to live. I will use this day for dharma practice and will not waste any time with worldly activities."

Do not let your life pass by without experiencing wonder at being alive. Consider every day you live as an extra bonus. In fact, every second we remain alive is most precious. When you meditate intensely on the impermanence of life you understand the preciousness of time. Among all concepts the concept of impermanence is said to be supreme. Eventually you will gain such an understanding of impermanence that you will no longer waste a single moment of your life. Failing to appreciate their lives, many people let life go to waste without practicing sincerely. Live your entire life as if each moment could be your last. Make your plans only for one day of practice at a time. Embrace all your activities with bodhicitta.

Text section 248 / stanza 34:

When the time of death comes, you will have to go alone and leave all your friends and relatives behind. Generally, life is spent supporting friends and relatives and fighting enemies with a mind clouded by attachment, resentment, ignorance, jealousy and pride. In the name of helping friends and fighting enemies, people kill, steal and

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141 The term 'someone who is terminally ill' [gcong can] means a 'person with a fatal sickness', a sick person [mi na tsha can] who will not recover from his sickness [na tshad drag mi thub pa], who will certainly die [gtan gtan shi 'gro gi red]. The term 'healthy person' [gcong med] refers to a person without any fatal disease. 'Many a' [brgya] is a pural particle.

commit various kinds of evil deeds. Sometimes you feel upset about a person and the thought, "I should really kill this person or at least beat him up" arises in your mind.

These kinds of thoughts become very powerful when three factors come together: 1) thinking a negative thought with intensity [shugs chen po], 2) continuously [rgyun ma chad pa] entertaining such a thought, and 3) feeling no regret ['gyod pa med pa] about having such a thought. If these three factors are gathered in your mind, this negative energy will actually ripen into a karmic fruition.

If you just occasionally feel strong resentment against someone, if bad thoughts come to your mind from time to time, as long as you recognize this to be a fault, such negative energy will not result in karmic ripening. Regreting negative thoughts is like pressing the delete button on a computer. Sincerely confess all the infinite negative thoughts you have had in this and all former lives. They are a strong negative force.

Confession done with heartfelt regret is very powerful. You can actually purify many old obscurations through confession. Confession directly purifies obscurations by addressing them individually, while gathering the accumulations of wisdom and merit purifies obscurations indirectly, in a general manner. Once your obscurations are purified, realization dawns in your mind.

In stanza 34 you develop strong regret for having accumulated so much *meaningless* [don med] negativity since you failed to realize that you will leave everything behind. When you die, you will die alone, without any friend, leaving behind your place [sa cha], country [yul ris], relatives [gnyen], friends [grogs], community [srid sde], enemies [dgra], companions [gnyen], family [khyim bza' tshang] and so forth. You will be pulled out of this life like a hair pulled from butter [mar gyi dkyil nas spu bton pa bzhin]. But, unaware of this, motivated by attachment and aversion, for the purpose of supporting your friends and defeating your enemies, you commit many negative deeds such as killing, stealing, lying and so forth. Thinking about all the negative deeds that you have accumulated for the sake of your friends and enemies, develop strong regret. Through confessing your evil deeds with true regret, you disconnect yourself from your own negativity and thus change your character.

Text section 249 / stanza 35:

Actually, committing all these negative deeds is totally pointless as sooner or later your enemies will die anyway, even if you do not defeat or kill them. All the friends and relatives you support and maintain are motivated by egotism [rang 'dod] and ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin] and will not bring you ultimate benefit. Through karmic and social connections you call people 'friends'. Through genetic ties you call people 'relatives'. Since you, your friends and relatives, and all your enemies will die too, since in fact the entire universe and all its inhabitants will cease to be, committing all kinds of wicked deeds for the sake of friends and foes is completely meaningless.

Nevertheless, in spite of knowing all of this, we continue to be driven by the same afflictions. Our mind seems crazed by intense attachment to the five sense pleasures of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. In order to make your mind calm and clear you

should go to an isolated place and stay for some time in retreat. In such a situation you might be able to gain some understanding of impermanence. Such insights will reveal the meaninglessness of worldly pursuits. You will develop strong regret and think, "Motivated by attachment and aversion for the sake of friends and foes, I accumulated negative deeds. This was utterly pointless. I was so deluded."

Text section 250 / stanza 36:

For example, if in last night's dream you enjoyed the five sense pleasures or if you dreamed you were subduing enemies, supporting friends, achieving gain and honor and so forth, upon waking this morning it became a mere memory. Nothing concrete remained. Similarly, all your past experience in real life is reduced to a mere memory. Only recollections remain. If this is the only outcome of all your struggles to protect your friends and defeat your enemies, you obviously wasted your time and energy.

The true result of all your negative deeds is that the energy of these negative mind-sets [ngan sems kyi nus pa] stays with you. This negative energy lies dormant in your mind and is what must be purified through confession. If you fail to purify this negative energy, even though you may be unaware of it, this negativity will eventually ripen in your mind and lead you to the three lower realms. Think, "My accumulation of so many negative deeds for the sake of this short and dream-like life was utterly pointless and harmful to myself and others. It was wrong. From now on, I will endeavor only in the practice of dharma. "

Text section 251 / stanza 37:

In this very life, moreover, you can see how friends become enemies and enemies become friends. You see your friends and enemies dying, and all that remains of these loving or hateful relationships is the thought, "My old friend has passed away," or, "My enemy has died." Through this observation you realize that all the terrible things you did to others in order to maintain relationships with friends and overcome enemies were utterly pointless.

Although your friends and enemies have perished, the wrong-doing that you committed has not died. Never for a moment assume that your negative deeds will disappear with the passing of time. The energy of your former negative deeds stays with you and you will eventually experience a terrible karmic result. For as long as you have not overcome your dualistic mind, your former misdeeds remain constantly with you.

This negativity can be purified through several methods. The supreme method is to overcome your dualistic mind through the realization of profound emptiness. Through the wisdom that realizes egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], your own mind essence, all your wicked deeds will be eradicated. In addition, gathering the two accumulations of merit and wisdom purifies negative deeds. Negative karma can be purified through heartfelt regret and confession, through strong compassion and devotion and through training in pure perception [dag snang].

All these methods enable one to overcome old habitual patterns [bag chags snying pa]. Beings who are not yet bodhisattvas can greatly reduce the karmic effect of their former misdeeds by practicing confession endowed with the four powers. But understand one point very clearly: Only when a bodhisattva has realized profound emptiness can all his negative karma and its ripening be utterly eradicated. Once that realization is stabilized, dualistic mind is overcome and neither an experiencer nor an experience of karmic ripening remains.

If, however, you fail to apply any of these methods, your former evil deeds will follow you like a shadow follows the body, and the karmic ripening of your deeds will remain waiting ahead of you. Karma is nothing other than the power of your own mind [sems kyi nus pa], which will accompany your wherever you go. The one who takes rebirth is your mind, and the positive and negative tendencies in your mind are always with you, ready to manifest, ready to ripen as a result of your deeds. Therefore, if you do not want to suffer the consequences you must rid yourself of the negative forces in your mind.

Text section 252:

When we die, body and mind separate, and we take a new rebirth. The habitual patterns of our mind [sems kyi bag chags] remain with us however. These habitual patterns are nothing other than our karma [las], our past volitional actions. Karma thus follows us like a shadow follows the body. For as long as we hold aggression in our mind, our mind holds the seeds for rebirth in the hell realms. The hell realm only ceases to exist for us when aggression has ceased in our mind.

Text section 253:

Whatever karma we create, its fruition *remains ahead* of us [las kyi 'bras bu mdun na gnas pa], waiting for us [mdun na sgug bsdad 'dug]. Since Buddha's cousin Nanda [dga' bo] was very attached to saṃsāra, Buddha took him to the hell realms and to the celestial realm of the thirty-three [sum cu rtsa gsum gyi lha yul] to show him what karma was waiting for him. After this Nanda overcame all attachment to his wife Sundarī [mdzes ma] and to the most beautiful of all goddesses, and he became an arhat.[142]

A donor called Śuka [mdang ldan] offered a park [kun dga' ra ba] to the Buddha. While Śuka was measuring a location for the garden's construction, Śāriputra [sha ri'i bu] could see that the fruition of this tremendous meritorious action would ripen for Śuka during his very lifetime [tshe 'di la].[143] This type of karma is called 'karma experienced within this life' [mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las].

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142 See the 11th story of *Kalpalatā*, page 460; *Heaven Tree*, pages 50-53; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 247-255.

143 Śuka [mdang ldan] is probably another name for Anāthapiṇḍada [mgon med zas sbyin], one of Buddha's main sponosrs and the one who donated the Jetavana (Prince Jeta's Grove) in

Text section 254:

When great lamas and celebrities travel, they have a man literally called the 'carpet spreader' [gdan 'byams], whose function is to prepare their daily accommodations in advance. He travels half a day ahead to set up camp. He *sets up the residence* [gnas gzhi btang ba], builds the hearth [thab bzungs] and so forth.

Just as all these preparations are made in advance before a great lama arrives, so all the preparations for the ripening of our karma, positive as well as negative, are already in place. In the same way as lamas and celebrities are received by their servants, we will be received and welcomed either by the henchmen of Yama, the Lord of Death, or by celestial beings and protectors.

Text section 255 / stanza 38:

We neither know where we came from in our previous lifetimes nor do we know where we will go when we die. We are like little seasonal insects that only live from spring to autumn, flying around without any orientation. We know it is said that we will very soon cease to exist, but we do not truly realize this. We do not actually believe that the evil we committed in the past is going to catch up with us. Instead we think that we will probably have a long lifespan.

We tend to believe in the permanence of life, perceiving our personal life as truly existing. We follow cultural conventions as though they were laws of nature, and cling to these fixations and deep-rooted beliefs strongly. Despite being *ephemeral* [glo bur ba], we believe in our own greatness and attach considerable importance to ourselves and to our activities, thus intensifying our fixations and attachments to life. The more important we think we are, the more attachment and fixations we build up. In fact, however, we are always on the verge of death and none of our worldly activities are of any importance at all. In the face of death they are utterly meaningless. Only the dharma can benefit us. Not realizing this, we commit various wicked deeds out of ignorance, aversion and attachment, thereby accumulating much negative karma.

Being ignorant about what to do and what not to do, and driven by feelings of attachment to our own group and our own goals as well as feelings of aversion toward other groups and what we do not desire, we have committed and accumulated various evil deeds such as killing, stealing and the like. We have committed the ten non-virtuous actions, the five crimes with immediate retribution, the five secondary crimes with immediate retribution, the four serious faults, the five perverted ways of sustenance and others. Generate strong regret in your heart, thinking that the karmic fruition of these negative deeds will be unbearable.

Śrāvastī to the Saṃgha. See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 191-200; *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 169.

The ten non-virtuous actions [dge ba bcu] are: 1) taking life [srog gcod pa], 2) taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], 3) sexual misconduct [log g.yem], 4) speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], 5) sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], 6) harsh speech [tshig rtsub], 7) worthless chatter [ngag kyal], 8) covetousness [rnab sems], 9) wishing harm to others [gnod sems] and 10) wrong views [log lta].

The five crimes with immediate retribution [mtshams med pa lnga] are: 1) killing one's father [pha gsod pa], 2) killing one's mother [ma gsod pa], 3) killing an arhat [dra bcom pa gsod pa], 4) creating a split in the saṃgha [dge 'dun gyi dbyen byed pa] and 5) malevolently causing a buddha to bleed [de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku la ngan sems kyis khrag 'byin pa].

The five secondary crimes with immediate retribution [nye ba'i mtshams med pa lnga] are: 1) Raping a female arhat [dgra bcom ma la 'dod log spyod pa], 2) killing a true bodhisattva [byang sems nges gnas gsod pa], 3) killing a practicing saṃgha member [slob pa'i dge 'dun gsod pa], 4) preventing the income of the saṃgha [dge 'dun gyi 'du sgo 'phrog pa] and 5) destroying a stūpa [mchod rten bshig pa].

1) Since a female arhat has overcome the obscuration of afflictions she would never engage in sexual conduct. Therefore raping a female arhat is a severe crime. 2) A true [nges gnas] bodhisattva refers to a 'noble being bodhisattva' who is dwelling on one of the bodhisattva levels, as well as to those genuine beginning bodhisattvas, endowed with great bodhicitta, who will become true bodhisattvas in the future. 3) A practicing saṃgha member refers to those practitioners endowed with the precepts of individual liberation who practice the path of study, contemplation and meditation [thos bsam bsgom pa'i lam la slob pa'i dge 'dun]. 4) Preventing the income of the saṃgha means to keep others from making donations and presenting offerings to the saṃgha. 5) Destroying a stūpa means to destroy a representation of Buddha's mind.

The four serious faults [lci ba bzhi] are: 1) the serious fault of sitting at the head of the row of scholars [mkhas pa'i gral gong lci], 2) the serious fault of appropriating a tantrika's wealth [sngags pa'i nor lci], 3) the serious fault of accepting the prostration of a fully ordained monk [dge slong gi phyag lci] and 4) the serious fault of eating a practitioner's food [sgrub pa po'i zas lci].

These are four serious mistakes a practitioner should avoid: 1) One should never sit higher or at the top of a line of scholars, meaning those more learned than oneself. Doing this indicates that you do not acknowledge and accept the qualities of others, that you do not give respect to those who deserve it.

2) The wealth and possessions of a tantrika are as sensitive or perilous as the possessions of the saṃgha.

3) Ordinary people should always avoid standing or sitting in front of monks when the monks are offering prostrations. Monks are the upholders of the training in discipline, the precious vinaya, the sublime dharma. The vinaya is considered to be both dharma and Buddha, that is to say doctrine [bstan] and teacher [ston pa]. Among the three trainings of discipline, samādhi, and wisdom-knowledge, the training in

discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa] is considered to be the most precious, being both dharma and Buddha.

Among the three piṭakas, the vinaya piṭaka is said to be the basis of all since it contains the prātimokṣa precepts [sor sdom]. The vinaya is considered to be the representative of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi tshab] as well as the Buddha's teaching. When we prostrate to a monk, we prostrate to the dharma as well as to the Buddha since the monk upholds the vinaya. We are also prostrating to the saṃgha as the monk is a member of the saṃgha. Accepting a prostration from a monk greatly diminishes one's personal merit.

4) One should never eat the food of a practitioner who is staying in retreat, even if the retreatant offers the food. Retreatants are recipients of offerings and not donors of food. Since a retreatant strives for enlightenment in order to free all beings from suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlighenment, his personal food is the food of all sentient beings. Taking food from a retreatant is as severe as taking food away from all sentient beings.

The eight perverse acts [log pa brgyad] are: 1) criticizing goodness [dkar phyogs la smad pa], 2) praising evil [nag phyogs la bstod pa], 3) interrupting or destroying the accumulation of merit of a virtuous person [dge ba can gyi tshogs bsags pa la bar du gcod cing tshogs bcag pa], 4) disturbing the minds of those who have devotion [dad pa can gyi thugs dkrugs pa], 5) giving up one's master [bla ma spangs], 6) giving up one's deity [lha spangs], 7) giving up one's vajra brothers and sisters [mched lcam spangs] and 8) desecrating a sacred mandala [dkyil 'khor gnyan po dral].

1) Criticizing goodness means putting down virtue and virtuous conduct. Never speak badly about the benefits of virtue such as the ten virtuous actions, bodhicitta or the six transcendental perfections. Never say that such virtues are pointless or bring no results.

2) Avoid praising negativity and non-virtuous conduct such as praising a so-called hero who has killed many beings.

3) Never create obstacles for those who practice virtue and gather the accumulation of merit. Never prevent practitioners from practicing virtue.

4) Never upset the minds of the faithful by trying to destroy their faith and devotion. Never praise your own teacher in order to destroy the faith of other practitioners in their personal teachers. Never criticize or slander any teacher of the genuine dharma in order to destroy his student's faith. This is crucial. A faithful mind is a mind infused with happiness. To destroy that kind of faith means to destroy a sentient being's happiness, and this constitutes a root downfall for a bodhisattva. Only if a false guru is teaching a wrong path, a perverted form of dharma, is a bodhisattva allowed to prevent others from following such a teacher.

5) To give up one's master means to say, "From now on this person is no longer my guru," and to no longer regard that person as one's teacher. This constitutes severing one's connection to one's guru. A student who receives the prātimokṣa precepts from

a teacher is duty-bound to respect that teacher. If he instead abandons him, he is committing a serious mistake. When a student receives the bodhisattva precepts from a teacher and then abandons that teacher, his precepts will deteriorate [nyams pa]. A student who abandons his Vajrayāna master completely destroys all his tantric samayas.

All qualities that a student acquires from a teacher are based on the intimate relationship of cause [rgyu] and condition [rkyen]. The teacher is the condition for all dharma qualities that arise in the mind of the student, and the dharma that he has taught the student is the cause for these qualities to arise. The dharma is like the seed, and the teacher is like the soil, the water, and the sun. The seed will ripen only if planted in soil, irrigated with water, and warmed by the sun.

Abandoning the Buddha or one's teacher means abandoning the conditions for attaining happiness [bde ba'i rkyen]. Abandoning the dharma means abandoning the causes for attaining happiness [bde ba'i rgyu]. Happiness here refers to the temporary happiness of the higher states of saṃsāra, the happinesss of liberation and the ultimate happiness of omniscience.

6) Giving up one's meditation deity [yi dam] means giving up the dharma. To carry out the practice of a meditation deity means committing in one's mind, "I will practice the meditation and recitation of this deity until I have reached the realization of this deity." For example, you commit to meditate on the Bodhisattva Mañjuśri until you have gained the realization of Mañjuśri. This is your dharma path to enlightenment.

7) Giving up one's vajra brothers and sisters means abandoning the saṃgha. Respecting one's dharma friends and keeping harmony in the saṃgha is of utmost importance.

8) Desecrating a sacred maṇḍala means violating the spiritual commitments, the samayas [dam tshig] for body, speech and mind of a particular tantric sādhana. For instance, if one practices the sādhana of a Mañjuśri maṇḍala, one must keep the spiritual commitments that go along with that practice. Keeping the commitments, one will progress swiftly. If one breaks the commitments, one will quickly advance to the three lower realms of saṃsāra. The maṇḍala is a sensitive, perilous and sacred object [yul gnyan po].

The five perverted ways of sustenance [log pa'i 'tsho ba lnga] are: 1) obtaining something through pretentiousness [tshul 'chos], 2) obtaining something through flattery [kha gsag], 3) obtaining something through hinting at it [gzhogs slong], 4) obtaining something through open theft [thob kyis 'jal ba], and 5) obtaining something through calculated generosity [rnyed pas rnyed pa 'tshol ba].

1) 'Pretentiousness' means trying to obtain food or donations from a sponsor by pretending to be something which one is not, or by pretending to have certain qualities which one does not have. 2) 'Flattery' means trying to obtain food or donations from a sponsor through speaking pleasant words that will delight the sponsor. 3) 'Hinting' means trying to obtain something that belongs to someone else by praising it. For instance, praising someone else's watch with the expectation that it

will be given. 4) 'Open theft' in this context means obtaining something that belongs to someone else by saying, "I need this," and simply snatching it from its owner. 5) 'Calculated generosity' means presenting a small gift to the sponsor in hope of obtaining a large donation in return.

Text section 256 / stanza 39:

We have committed and accumulated in this and former lifetimes all these and many other forms of wrong-doing. We should confess it all right now since as our lifespan is diminishing. We begin to run out of time from the moment of our birth. Our lifespan decreases moment to moment, never increasing. This process of life dwindling away does not stop for even a second. Therefore, we must begin confession right now. When the time of death has come, even the king of all physicians, the Medicine Buddha [sangs rgyas sman pa'i rgyal po] in person, will not be able to help us. If death comes to everybody else, it will eventually also come to you, no matter whether you are powerful, rich, or highly realized. Nobody can escape death.

Text section 257:

Life runs out like a pond cut off from its water supply. Similarly, all sentient beings have set forth on the path toward death. This is a one-way street and no one can reverse this process. Nobody returns from death. Everything that is born will die. This *fleeting life* [glo bur tshe], as momentary as a lightning bolt in the night sky, is not something we can place our trust in. Thinking that this life is a happy and stable condition is utter foolishness. No wise person would place his trust in this fleeting life? Only fools do so.

Meditating correctly on the impermanence of life leads to a relaxed mind at ease. Such a person will use every remaining moment to practice the dharma and purify his mind. One who has really taken impermanence to heart is strongly inspired to practice and will not waste any time with pointless and harmful activities such as arguing, fighting and struggling, but will treat other beings only with love and kindness. A practitioner like this will be able to give victory to others and take defeat upon himself.

Text section 258 / stanza 40:

Stricken by disease, you lie on your deathbed. You might be surrounded by loving relatives and friends; you might have the best doctors and nurses treating you. Nevertheless, none of them will be able to help you. You alone will have to experience the harsh and unpleasant feeling of your life being severed. You alone will experience the successive dissolving of the elements [thim rim], and you alone will have to face the deluded perceptions of your bad karma. No one can relieve you from this suffering.

No sympathy offered by your relatives can change the fact that you are dying. No one among your relatives and physicians can give you proper guidance about how to face death. No one can help you cross over to the other side. You are alone and you will

feel very helpless. Although your friends, relatives, doctors and nurses try to help the best they can, none of them can dispel your suffering or take your suffering upon themselves. You are left without protection.

Each being experiences his or her own personal happiness and suffering. This individual perception cannot be transferred to another. One's personal experience comes about through one's own former deeds. All 'ordinary beings' [so so skye bo][144] must experience their own individual karma [rang rang so so'i las so so myong dgos pa]. Accumulating various forms of karma individually distinct from one another, ordinary beings experience different fruitions of their actions. Ordinary beings lack the capacity to remove the suffering of other ordinary beings and certainly cannot protect other sentient beings from any suffering at the moment of death.

Text section 259 / stanza 41:

When you, someone habituated to negativity, enter the intermediate state [bar do], you will experience terrifying visions of persecution and abuse by the Māra of Death and his henchmen, beings with human bodies and animal heads. These deluded perceptions of the intermediate state, the bardo, are created by your own negative deeds and are personifications of your personal afflictions and habitual patterns. If your mind-stream is infested with negative thoughts and evil patterns, they will emerge at that time. Experiencing various frightening perceptions, you will not know how to protect yourself nor will your relatives and friends be able to help you at this point. Seeing no way out you feel totally desperate.

This stanza teaches that without overcoming your negative deeds and their fruitions through confession and dharma practice, you will inevitably face their negative consequences, the suffering of the three lower realms. When this time comes, the suffering is impossible to dispel. It is too late.

At the time of death only the dharma you have practiced will be of help. Only the meritorious and virtuous karma [bsod nams dge ba'i las] that you might have acccumulated while still alive through the practices of going for refuge [skyabs su 'gro ba], keeping pure discipline [tshul khrims], the seven branches [yan lag bdun pa] and so forth , will be able to help you now.

Although you have met the dharma and qualified teachers, although you have received the proper teachings, you failed to make use of your fortunate situation and did not practice. Now it is too late. Your life is ending. You are lying in your bed with just a tiny bit of life left in you. You breathe out for the last time, unable to breathe in again. Your mind panics and you encounter the frightening apparitions of the intermediate state, which are nothing other than the manifestations of the wicked

144 'Ordinary beings' [so so skye bo] are defined as 'individualized beings' because they move separately and distinctly from one another [tha dad so sor 'gro bas na so so'i skye bo zhes bya'o].

deeds and negative patterns lying dormant in your mind. Now you feel regret for failing to practice while you were still alive. Now you understand that no external power can help you. You understand that the dharma—the virtue and merit you accumulated—are your only refuge. You had the chance to help yourself by practicing the dharma, but you did not do it.

Practicing the dharma means overcoming your afflictions. You can deal with your afflictions by not acting them out when they arise. You can remain like the trunk of a tree and keep your body, speech and mind still. Or you can transform your negative emotions into positive qualities such as compassion, love, kindness, devotion and so forth. Or, once you have received Secret Mantrayāna teachings, you might even know how to recognize your buddha nature when afflictions arise in your mind, letting them collapse within that recognition. Whatever method you have learned, you must practice as much as you can and remember it at all times and in all situations. Any of these different levels of practice can keep you from being overwhelmed when afflictions arise.

That capacity, the force that prevents you from being overwhelmed by afflictions, is called ‘merit’ [bsod nams]. The power to smooth out all disharmonious circumstances is called merit [mi mthun pa’i phyogs thams cad ’jam thub pa zhig la bsod nams zer gi yod].

For instance, when great anger arises in your mind and you refrain from acting it out with body, speech or mind, but just remain still like the trunk of a tree, you have the merit to overcome this anger, this disharmonious situation. The śrāvakas deal with afflictions in this manner.

When anger arises in the mind of a bodhisattva, he establishes the view of egolessness. If he sees the afflictions arising in the mind of another, he generates compassion, thinking, “He is expressing his intense suffering through anger. He does not know the horrible consequence of anger nor does he know how to control and overcome his anger. How pitiful.” This is how bodhisattvas deal with afflicitions.

A practitioner of Secret Mantrayāna recognizes the buddha nature directly as the essence of any afflictions that arise. Within that recognition all afflictions collapse, and wisdom arises. Both Mahāyāna practitioners and practitioners of Secret Mantrayāna know that afflictions fundamentally lack existence [gzhi ma grub pa]. All these methods to overcome afflictions are called ‘merit’ if one can apply them. The foremost task of a practitioner is to guard his mind against afflictions. As it is said in stanza 18 of chapter five of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra:

> Except for the discipline of guarding one’s mind,
> What is the use of many (other forms of) disciplines?
>
> sems srung brtul zhugs ma gtogs pa
> brtul zhugs mang po ci zhig bya

You need to build up the meritorious capacity to be able to deal with your afflictions. You practice the seven branches [yan lag bdun pa], bodhicitta, the six perfections and so forth, simply for this reason. Your merit and virtue will then be able to protect you and grant you refuge at the time of death, the time when your dharma practice is put to the ultimate test.

Text section 260 / stanza 42:

Now, as you are about to die, you cry out *"Protectors!"* [mgon po], calling upon the buddhas and bodhisattvas in desperation as your place of refuge [skyabs gnas]. Now you regret that you lived your life so heedlessly [bag med], unaware of the consequences of your actions. You had no *faith of conviction in karma, the law of cause and effect* [rgyu 'bras yid ches pa'i dad pa]. You were ignorant about what to do and what to avoid. You did not learn what is meant by virtue [dge ba] and non-virtue [mi dge ba]. You spent your life drinking sweet-tasting poison, never thinking about the terrible consequences. With your *three gates* [sgo gsum]—body, speech and mind—you acted heedlessly, committing many wicked deeds for the sake of this transient life.

You were *unaware* [ma 'tshal] that one suffering follows upon the next: first, the *fear of being severed from life at the moment of death* ['chi kha gnad gcod kyi 'jigs pa]; then, *the horrors of the intermediate state after death* [shi nas bar do'i 'jigs pa], where you experience the suffering of being caught and led away by the henchmen of Yama [gshin rje'i pho nya]; and finally, the *terrors of the lower realms in the next life* [phyi ma ngan songs gi 'jigs pa].

For the duration of your short life, you engaged in utterly *pointless* [snying po cung zad med pa] worldly activities. For insignificant aims you expended great effort. Having achieved your worldly goals, you find that they proved to be fruitless ['bras bu med], all hardship without result [ngal ba 'bras med]. Worldly aims are difficult to achieve [thob dka'], difficult to protect [srung dka'], and difficult to further [phel dka']. Once achieved, they are easily lost. On top of all that, they do not guarantee long-lasting satisfaction. Whatever you have achieved, you will lose it again. In the end, it turns out to have been a pointless pursuit because everything falls under the power of impermanence [mi rtag pa]. The four limitations imposed by impermanence [mi rtag mtha' bzhi] are:[145]

> The end of birth is death;
> The end of hoarding is dispersal;
> The end of gathering is separation;
> The end of elevation is downfall.

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145 See also *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. II*, page 99: "Whereever one is born, birth ends in death, meeting ends in separation, prosperity ends in decline, and rise ends in fall [gang du skyes kyang / skyes pa'i mtha' 'chi ba / 'dus pa'i mtha' 'bral ba / 'byor ba'i mtha' rgud pa / mtho ba'i mtha' ltung ba].

skyes pa'i mtha' ma 'chi ba
bsags pa'i mtha' ma 'dzad pa
'dus pa'i mtha' ma 'bral ba
mtho ba'i mtha' ma lhung ba

Text section 261 / stanza 43:

A criminal being led away to be either mutilated or executed in public by order of the king *will be petrified* [bred par 'gyur te]. His *mouth will be gaping* [kha gdang] and *dry* [kha skams], and his *glazed eyes cyanic blue* [mig rtsa ngan pa gno che re].[146] The lustre will vanish from his face [bzhin mdangs nyams pa], and he will keep his head down [mgo 'phang dma' ba] in fear, being downtrodden.

Since a person whose limbs are about to be amputated is already frightened to death, then how much more fear will he have facing the horrors of death? Criminals are led to the place of execution by their fellow humans, but at the moment of death we are led to the hell realms by the henchmen of Yama, who are not our fellow humans.

Text sections 262-263 / stanza 44:

Just as criminals are petrified by their imminent mutilation, we will be petrified when clasped by the frightful messengers of Yama, the Lord of Death. While a criminal might be facing amputation of his hand, we will be facing the horrifying visions of the intermediate state and will be plagued by utter despair.

The *demons* [srin po; rakṣa] mentioned here are 'man-eating demons' [mi za mkhan gyi srin po]. *Stricken with the disease of great panic* ['jig chen nad kyis thebs gyur pa] indicates that at the moment of death one will be totally petrified with fear, unable to control one's bladder and intestines, soiling oneself with excrement and urine.

Text sections 264-265 / stanzas 45 and 46:

In utter horror, *eyes gaping, showing an expression of terror* [bred sha thon pa],[147] in *fear* [skyi bung / 'jigs skrag] and despair, we will search the four quarters for any help or refuge. We will be in such a state of shock that we cannot even close our eyes if we

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146 *Glazed eyes* [mig rtsa ngan pa] means a 'miserable look in the eyes' [nyam thag pa'i lta stangs], when the expression in the eyes has become weak and pitiful [nyams chung]. Literally, the term means 'the channel of the eye gone bad' [mig rtsa ngan pa], indicating that the eye has lost its power. The same phrase has been also translated as 'dreadful sunken eyes', 'lifeless eyes', 'glassy eyes', and 'bulging eyes'. Western medicine explains the blue color on corpses as a death-related phenomenon caused by lack of oxygen, which leads to blue lips, fingers, eyes etc. This blue color is called 'cyanic', or 'cyanic blue' [ngo che re ba].

147 Dictionary: 'Showing an expression of fear' [skrag pa'i nyams 'gyur thon pa / 'jigs pa'i rnam 'gyur thon pa].

want to. Paralyzed by fear, our eyes are staring cyanic blue [mig rtsa sngo cer re gcer zhing].

Searching the four quarters and seeing no one to help us, we will become *completely* downtrodden and *depressed* [kun nas sems zhum zhing yi mug par 'gyur ro]. What can we do if no one can help us? Even the Buddha will be unable to offer help.

Think about Devadatta, Buddha's cousin. He had repeatedly committed extremely wicked deeds, crimes without retribution. At one point in time the earth broke open and Devadatta went alive—in his very body—down to the lowest hell realm, the avīcī hell. Devadatta cried out in desperation, "Gautama, I burn, I am ablaze, I am consumed by fire!" Even Buddha himslef could do no more than teach him the dharma, saying, "Devadatta, from the bottom of your heart pray. Repeat this, 'I go for refuge to the Buddha, I go for refuge to the dharma, I go for refuge to the saṃgha'."[148]

Buddha showered the same compassion and blessing on Devadatta as on his own son Rāhula. But even the Buddha cannot place beings on the level of liberation if they do not practice the dharma. Our practice of the dharma is our only refuge at the time of death. Since Devadatta took refuge to the three jewels as he went down to the avīcī hell, he will remain there 'only' for one great aeon [bskal chen gcig]. After his karma in the avīcī hell is exhausted, he will eventually become a pratyekabuddha.

Text section 266 / stanza 46

Each of the four great guardian kings [rgyal chen bzhi] resides on the fourth terrace of Mount Meru, overlooking one of the four directions, and acting as a spiritual guide for one of the four quarters. Dhṛtarāṣṭa [yul 'khor srung] is the great Guardian King of the east [shar phyogs skyong ba'i rgyal chen] and has a retinue of gandharvas [dri za]. Virūḍhaka ['phags skyes po] is the great Guardian King of the south [lho phyogs skyong ba'i rgyal chen] and has a retinue of kumbāṇḍhas [grul bum]. Virūpākṣa [spyan mi bzang] is the great Guardian King of the west [nub phyogs skyong ba'i rgyal chen] and has a retinue of nāgas [klu]. Vāiśravaṇa [rnam thos sras] is the great Guardian King of the north [byang phyogs skyong ba'i rgyal chen] and has a retinue of yakṣas [gnod sbyin].

Our continent, Jambudvīpa ['dzam gling / 'dzam bu'i gling], is on the southern side of Mount Meru and is, therefore, the domain of Virūḍhaka. The south is also considered to be the direction of Yama, the Lord of Death [gshin rje]. Virūḍhaka protects those who have led virtuous lives from the Lord of Death.

We have achieved a rebirth in Jambudvīpa, the most perfect place to practice the dharma. Moreover, we have attained the best possible physical body, the human body endowed with the eight freedoms and ten advantages. We have met a sublime Buddhist master, and we have received the dharma, through which we gained some understanding of what to do and what to avoid. We are in the fortunate position to be able to distinguish virtue and non-virtue. Many humans are completely ignorant

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148 *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 504-510.

about good and evil, having no idea about karma, the law of cause and effect. In spite of all these perfect conditions, we did not practice the dharma but instead committed negative deeds. Thus, we are *unfortunate persons* [skal chad po], cut off from the chance to gather merit.

As a practitioner, bring all this to mind. Meditate how it will be when you are about to die if you have not practiced the dharma. Remembering all your wicked deeds, imagine clearly that you are going to the three lower realms. These teachings by Śāntideva and Paltrül Rinpoche must be practiced as meditation instructions on mind-training [blo sbyong].

Remembering all the harm you have inflicted on other beings—your parents, relatives, friends and enemies, as well as animals, insects and so on—and weighing your virtue and non-virtue at the moment of death, you will discover that you lack virtue and are overloaded with abundant negativities. You will think, "Alas, I have failed. I will not fare well." Your eyes will fill with tears; you will cover your chest with scratch marks; you face will turn bright blue; your breathing will become shaky and your legs and arms will tremble. With a mind filled with immense sadness, you will begin the great journey into your next life. Therefore, consider over and over again, "Wouldn't it be better to practice now the dharma that will help me at the moment of death?"

Meditate until you feel the pain and anguish of the death experience. Until you truly experience the suffering of dying through your meditation practice, you cannot practice the dharma well. Contemplations like this that bring such experiences about are called 'guidance into experience' [myong khrid]. Visualize yourself as an evil-doer who is about to die. Experience the entire sequence of the moment of death—being fetched by the henchmen of the Lord of Death, entering the bardo, and finally taking rebirth in one of the three lower realms. Once you understand the devastating consequences of wrong-doing, you will actively remedy them through confession and dharma practice.

Remember all your negative mind-sets and feel true regret and shame about them. Feel in your heart that you have done wrong, that you have been really mistaken in committing all these negative deeds with body, speech and mind. Evoke all the buddhas and bodhisattvas, offer your heartfelt confession to them and ask for forgiveness. Spend a few minutes every day offering confession in this way. At the end, imagine the buddhas and bodhisattvas granting you absolution and think that your misdeeds are now purified. This thought is extremely important. Conclude with the thought, "I have confessed my misdeeds, the buddhas and bodhisattvas have absolved me, and I have promised to refrain from repeating the same negative actions. Now they have been purified."

You need to know the proper way of practicing [sgrub stangs] the dharma. Even if you are a yogin living in a cave, this is nothing special; wild animals live in the wilderness all their lives without attaining enlightenment. Nor is staying in a retreat cell for a long time impressive in itself; prisoners spend many years incarcerated without making spiritual progress. In order to progress you must mingle the dharma with your mind.

A person who knows how to practice the dharma has the methods needed to purify his wicked deeds and negativity, while people unlearned in the dharma lack that knowledge. Therefore, knowing how to practice properly is more important than practicing intensely without knowledge [sgrub pa las sgrub stangs de gtso che gi red]. As it is said:

> Wickedness committed by the wise, though heavy, will be light.
> Wickedness committed by the foolish, though minor, will be grave.
>
> mkhas pa'i sdig pa che na'ang yangs
> blun po'i sdig pa chung'ang chen

Treat every day as if it were your last. The time, place and circumstances of your death are uncertain. Therefore, do not place your trust in this life, and waste your time with worldly activities. This sounds easy, but is very difficult to practice. This—the real teaching of the Buddha—is totally contrary to worldly life and means giving up all worldly activities, dropping out of ordinary life and spending your remaining time in contemplation and meditation. Of course, even practitioners must sustain themselves. However, having covered your basic needs, look for nothing further but dedicate yourself completely to practice.

Such dedication only arises if you have truly internalized the four contemplations that transform your mind [blo ldog rnam pa bzhi]: (1) contemplation on the difficulty of obtaining the freedoms and advantages [dal 'byor rnyed par dka' ba], (2) contemplation on impermanence [tshe mi rtag pa], (3) contemplation on the defects of saṃsāra ['khor ba'i nyes dmigs] and (4) contemplation on karma, the law of cause and effect [las rgyu 'bras]. These four contemplations turn your mind away from clinging to saṃsāra as something meaningful. Once you have deeply understood in your heart that all saṃsāric activities are pointless, you have developed true renunciation [nges 'byung].

Text sections 267-268 / stanza 46:

Understand three things: 1) you will certainly die, 2) the time of death is uncertain and 3) at the time of death nothing but the dharma can help you.

1) You will certainly die [nges par 'chi ba]. It is a natural law that whatever is born must die. Life is running out like the sun is setting in the west. From moment to moment your life is getting shorter like an animal being dragged to slaughter. Both the eighty-years-old and an infant less than a year are destined to die; at the most neither will reach more than one hundred years of age. This seems easy to grasp but the certainty of death is not readily taken to heart.

2) The time of death is uncertain [nam 'chi nges pa med pa]. Despite your youth and good health there is no guarantee you will not die soon. On what basis do you have the confidence that you will not die today?

You could only develop such confidence if the omniscient Buddha prophesied a certain length of life for you, or if you had undefiled higher perceptions that allowed you to know with certainty that you would not die for a set period of time. Such confidence could also arise if you had a meeting with the Lord of Death on a good day, and he told you, "I will not come to take you with me for such and such a period of time."

The duration ['phen pa] of this life is like an arrow or like a butter lamp. The distance of an arrow shot depends on the pulling power of the archer, and the duration of a butter lamp depends on the amount of butter. You cannot be sure when the butter lamp will run out of butter—today, tomorrow, in the first half of the month, or in the latter half of the month. The time of your death is similarly uncertain. When your lifespan is finished, you will die. The Medicine Buddha himself has no medicine that prevents death. Even Amitayus, the Buddha of Longevity, has no power to extend your life indefinitely. Since even Vajrapani cannot protect you, you will die.

Although death caused by sudden circumstances can sometimes be prevented through rituals and the practice of virtue, you might still die prematurely, just as a butter lamp is easily extinguished by the wind. Thus, the lifespan of beings in Jambudvīpa is uncertain. Death will find you, no matter where you are, no matter with whom you associate. No matter how much wealth and riches you possess, you cannot buy off death. Contemplate this repeatedly from the depth of your heart.

3) At the time of death nothing can help you ['chi ba'i dus gang gis mi phan pa]. Only the sublime dharma will be of use to you at the time of death. Neither your parents, your relatives, friends and beloved ones, nor anyone else will benefit you in any way. Nor will your riches. Unable to let go of your relatives, friends and riches, yet unable to care for them any longer, when the time comes you will embark on the great journey into the next life, naked and alone.

Your relatives will divide and share your wealth and you will take not so much as a needle. Yet the negative deeds you accumulated for the sake of your relatives and friends cannot be divided and shared with anyone else; instead, you alone will carry the burden of your negative deeds. Only the sublime dharma will be of benefit to you. Only the dharma can be your protector [mgon po], your refuge [skyabs], your island [gling], your resort [gnas], your support [dpung gnyen], your vision [snang ba], and your lamp [sgron me].

Therefore, create now the causes for dying without fear and regret. Make the firm commitment, "From now on I will exert myself exclusively in virtuous activities such as the practice of refuge, bodhicitta, the six transcendental perfections and so forth. From now on, I willl abstain from committing any acts of non-virtue."

Text section 269:

The power of the support [rten gyi stobs] has two interpretations: 1) the supporting object for making confessions [bshags par bya ba'i yul gyi rten] and 2) the support through which to purify negative deeds [sdig pa dag bya'i rten]. In this context, the

power of support refers to the second interpretation, the support that functions as an object for purifying negative deeds. Text section 200 already described the power of the support as an object for confession [bshags yul].

Text section 270 / stanza 47:

Driven by fear of taking rebirth in the three lower realms, from now on we take refuge to the three jewels. This is the main topic of stanzas 47 and 48. The three jewels are the objects of refuge [skyabs yul] and also the support for confessing negativities [sdig pa bshags pa'i rten]. We rely on the three jewels as a support for purifying our wrong-doings.

We seek refuge in the Buddha, the dharma and the saṃgha of the bodhisattvas. The buddhas and bodhisattvas, who are endowed with inconceivable qualities, wisdom, knowledge and supernatural powers, constantly help and care for others. To these sublime objects we go for refuge. From the first moment of receiving teachings on how to practice the sublime dharma until the attainment of complete enlightenment, we go for refuge.

Buddha is called *the Victor* because he is victorious over the enemy of the four māras [bdud bzhi'i dgra las rgyal bas rgyal ba]. Since he is a place of trust [yid brtan pa'i gnas] for all sentient beings, he is called *the protector of all beings* ['gro ba ma lus pa'i mgon po]. Having liberated himself from all fears, the Buddha has the capacity to protect others from their personal fears.

In the phrase *all beings equal to the reaches of space* [nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i 'gro ba thams cad], the term 'space' is an example of something beyond count [grangs las 'das pa'i dpe], an example of something beyond boundaries [mtha' yas pa'i dpe], or an example of something beyond measure [tshad med pa'i dpe].

Text sections 271-272 / stanza 47

The Śilākṣipta-sūtra recounts the story when Buddha went to Kuśinagara and five hundred Mallas from Pāpā [sdig pa can] were cleaning the road for him.[149]

Text section 273 / stanza 47:

The ten powers are qualities of Buddha's mind [thugs kyi yon tan]. Only a buddha is endowed with these ten powers.[150] The Buddha is the unexcelled refuge [skyabs bla na

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[149] For further details see *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 528-531; *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 451-452.

[150] For a detailed explanation of the ten powers of the Tathāgata [de bzhin gshegs pa'i stobs bcu] see Khenpo Chöga's commentary in text sections 56-61 of the first chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

med pa] since he can eradicate all fear and suffering. Thus, stanza 47 presents the jewel of the buddha [sangs rgyas dkon mchog].

Text section 274 / stanza 47

The term *superficial people* [skye bo mdo shor ba] refers to 'those who do what is unimportant' [gal chung chung las] and thus 'lose what is important' [gal chen po shor 'gro mkhan], or 'those who have lost the main point' [gnad 'gag shor 'gro mkhan].

Text section 275 / stanza 48

A beginning bodhisattva must engage in study, contemplation and meditation. Although the knowledge of study [thos pa'i shes rab] comes easily, it also dissipates easily. If one contemplates the knowledge of study, practicing analytic meditation [dpyod bsgom], one will gain certainty [nges shes] about the dharma. This is the knowledge of contemplation [bsam pa'i shes rab]. One begins to see the truth of the dharma [bden pa mthong], the view [lta ba]. Even such certainty about the dharma cannot eradicate one's own suffering, however. Scholars [mkhas pa] who have gone only this far in their dharma practice might still take rebirth in the hell realms. They might have gained heartfelt certainty in all the teachings, but if they are unable to liberate their afflictions they nevertheless carry the seeds of the lower realms in their mind-streams.

The knowledge of the dharma must be practiced in meditation. Once meditation has been well perfected, one will attain realization [rtogs pa], a knowledge that has realized egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], the recognition of buddha nature. Only then will one be able to annihilate one's own afflictions and suffering. Therefore, the practice tradition teaches:

> Theoretical understanding wears out like patches.
> Experiences fade away like haze,
> But realization remains unchanging like space.
>
> go ba lhan pa 'dra ste khog nas 'gro
> nyams na bun 'dra ste yal nas 'gro
> rtogs pa nam mkha' 'dra ste 'gyur ba med

To really practice the dharma properly, we *must alternate between study, contemplation and meditation* [thos bsam bsgom gsum 'dres mar byed dgos]. When the teacher is expounding the dharma to the student, his teaching style need not be eloquent [tshig sgros snyan snyan] and full of scriptural quotations. He should focus primarily on the meaning rather than on impressive language. While teaching, he must apply what he teaches to his own mind. Applying the dharma while teaching is called meditation.

A beginning bodhisattva tries to develop bodhicitta to the best of his ability. Yet at times he forgets his noble motivations. Sometimes his old habitual patterns of afflictions come through and cloud his mind. This is utterly normal as long as the

bodhisattva is an 'ordinary being bodhisattva' [so so skye bo byang chub sems dpa']. However, a beginning bodhisattva should always strive to never be separated for long from bodhicitta.

At times a bodhisattva, while observing all precepts and trying his best to help others with a pure motivation, still feels that he is of no help at all. At that point keep in mind that even a buddha cannot help all sentient beings. The main activity of a beginning bodhisattva is to develop bodhicitta, to make aspirations for all sentient beings, to practice the six perfections, and to dedicate the merit of his dharma practice. When one's own mind is liberated through realization [rtogs pas bdag grol], one will be able to liberate others through compassion [thugs rjes gzhan grol]. To the extent one progresses in one's practice, to the degree one's own suffering is overcome, to that extent one will be able to benefit others.

Text section 276 / stanza 48:

After the Buddha had reached complete and perfect enlightenment under the *Bodhi Tree* [byang chub shing gi dbang po], sitting on the Vajra Seat [skr. vajrāsana] at Bodhgaya, he spoke:

> I have found a nectar-like dharma
> Which is profound, peaceful, free from complexity, luminous and uncompounded.
> To whomever I teach it, it will not be understood.
> Therefore, I will remain in the forest without teaching.
>
> zab zhi spros bral 'od gsal 'dus ma byas
> bdud rtsi lta bu'i chos zhig bdag gis rnyed
> bdag gis bstan kyang go bar mi 'gyur pas
> mi smra nags 'dabs nyid du gnas par bya

Buddha had realized profound emptiness [zab mo stong pa nyid], buddha nature, the state of wisdom [ye shes]. It is called *profound* [zab pa] because it is not within the domain of worldly meditation ['jig rten pa'i bsgom pa'i yul ma yin] and is beyond all worldly concepts ['jig rten pa'i blo las 'das pa]. Since emptiness is non-dual [gnyis su med pa], it is *peaceful* [zhi ba]. Since emptiness is free from all thoughts [rtog pa med pa], it is *without complexity* [spros bral]. Since emptiness is immaculate knowledge [dri ma med pa'i mkhyen pa], it is *luminous* ['od gsal ba]. It is a knowledge free from the stains [dri ma] of the two obscurations, the obscuration of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa; skr. kleśāvaraṇa] and the obscuration of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa; jñeyāvaraṇa]. Since emptiness is free from arising, ceasing and abiding [skye dgag gnas gsum dang bral ba], it is *uncompounded* ['dus ma byas].

Text section 277 / stanza 48:

Buddha has *realized* [thugs su chud pa] or understood [thugs su mkhyen pa] all dharmas, the 'dharma of *profound* emptiness' [zab pa stong pa nyid gyi chos] and the '*vast* dharma of the levels and paths' [rgya che ba sa dang lam gyi chos]. The dharma he has taught is comprised of the *dharma of statements* [lung gi chos] and the *dharma of realization* [rtogs pa'i chos]. The 'dharma of statements' refers to the statements of the tripiṭaka [lung sde snod gsum], and the 'dharma of realization' is the path of the three precious trainings [rtogs pa'i chos lam bslab pa gsum], which are: 1) the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], 2) the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa] and 3) the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. Thus, with the first two lines of stanza 48, Śāntideva has shown the jewel of the dharma [chos dkon mchog].

> If one grasps the meaning of just one stanza,
> This constitutes the doctrine of statements.
> If one gives rise to a virtuous mindset for just one instant,
> This constitutes the doctrine of realization.

> tshigs bcad gcig gi don shes na
> de ni lung gi bstan pa yin
> dge sems skad cig skyes pa na
> de ni rtogs pa'i bstan pa yin.

The dharma of statements is to understand what is meant by a noble mindset [bsam pa bzang po] and the dharma of realization is to give birth to a noble mindset. Therefore, the simplest way of defining the teaching of the Buddha is to say it is a noble mindset.

Those who have realized the wisdom of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab mngon du gyur mkhan] are called 'noble beings' ['phags pa]. This realization begins on the first bodhisattva level, which corresponds to the path of seeing [mthong lam]. These bodhisattvas cannot return to the delusion of ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. Therefore, the *assembly of the bodhisattvas* [byang chub sems pa'i tshogs] is called the *noble saṃgha of non-returners* ['phags pa phyir mi ldog pa'i dge 'dun]. Thus, with the second two lines of stanza 48, Śāntideva has presented the jewel of the saṃgha [dge 'dun dkon mchog].

Text section 278 / stanza 49:

Frightened by the three kinds of suffering, which are nothing other than the ripening of my own wicked deeds, I offer myself to Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, who is said to be the embodiment of the aspirations of all the buddhas [smon lam gyi rang gzugs]. He is one of the eight senior sons [sras kyi thu bo brgyad] of the Buddha, one of the eight great bodhisattvas. I also offer my body to Mañjughoṣa ['jam pa'i dbyangs], who is said to be the embodiment of the wisdom of the buddhas [ye shes kyi rang gzugs].

If we call upon the buddhas and bodhisattvas it must be with sincerity. Only when we sincerely wish to eliminate our negative deeds, if we are truly frightened by the consequences of our former karma, should we call upon them for help. Lacking such genuine fear, one should not call upon the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Khenpo Kunpal's intention to teach skillfully sometimes leads to phrases like *the mind of the buddhas would be disappointed* [de dag gi thugs kyang khrel bar 'gyur ro]. In reality, however, no buddha would ever become disappointed with any sentient being. As it is said in the sūtras:

> The buddhas are endowed with a loving mind;
> They are never upset with sentient beings.
>
> sangs rgyas rnams ni byams thugs ldan
> sems can rnams la smod mi mdzad

Text section 279 / stanza 50:

Text sections 279 through 281 explain the special qualities of Bodhisattva *Avalokita* [spyan ras gzigs] or Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug]. From the time he first developed bodhicitta he has striven exclusively for the benefit of others, without even the slighest trace of *attachment to self-centered interests* [rang 'dod kyi 'khri ba].[151]

Text section 280 / stanza 50:

The Buddha gazes constantly on all sentient beings. With his great compassion he ceaselessly guards and cares for sentient beings day and night. Not even for a single moment is there any interruption or bias to the unlimited compassion of the Buddha. Avalokiteśvara, also called 'the one who never closes his eyes' [mig mi 'dzum pa], is the personification of Buddha's compassion [snying rje'i rang gzugs]. From the depth of your heart, cry out to Avalokiteśvara, *letting out a great wailing* [pho chen po btab ste] or *letting out a strong lamentation with mournful crying* [nyams thag ngo ros 'o dod drag pos 'bod pa]: "Please help me, the great evildoer! Please grant me refuge from my fear that I will go to the three lower realms the very moment I die."

Text section 281-282 / stanza 50:

I have committed the ten non-virtuous actions with my body, speech and mind. Among them, three are committed through the body: taking life [srog gcod pa], taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], and sexual misconduct [log g.yem]. Four are committed by means of speech: speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], harsh words [tshig rtsub] and worthless chatter [ngag kyal]. Three are committed through mind: covetousness [rnab sems], wishing harm to others [gnod sems] and wrong views [log lta].

You must understand that saṃsāra is created by your own thoughts. Thoughts spring from ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin], holding on to the dichotomy of 'I' and 'others'. Ego-

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[151] Dictionary: attachment to egotistical-interests / selfish interests / self-centered interests / self-centered aims ['khri ba means zhen chags or chags pa].

clinging is based on ignorance [ma rig pa]. The moment you hold on to an 'I' you have created the 'other', setting in motion the endless chain of labeling everything as belonging to 'me' or to 'others'. Based on ignorance you give rise to afflictions, thereby accumulating karma. Once karma has been created and accumulated, you will inevitably have to endure the consequences of your actions. Our negative actions have led us into *perpetual* [rgya 'byams], continuous [rgyun chad med pa] or endless [mtha' med pa] delusion. Thus, *thoughts* [rnam rtog], primarily *ignorance* [ma rig pa], are called the *great demon* [gdon chen].

Therefore, acknowledge your negative deeds and bad actions for what they are and confess them. Use all these buddhas and bodhisattvas as the support to confess and purify your wicked deeds. Cry out with a lamenting voice, "Please protect me, the most wicked one!" Cry out with strong devotion to Avalokiteśvara for help so that he may grant you protection. Taking refuge, going for the protection of Avalokiteśvara in this manner purifies negative deeds and accumulates virtue.

Text section 283 / stanza 51:

Generally, Ākāśagarbha [nam mkha'i snying po] is considered the personification of the Buddha's blessings [byin rlabs kyi rang gzugs]. A beginning bodhisattva must learn what the bodhisattva precepts are, and should keep them even at the cost of his life. If, however, he commits any of the downfalls [ltung ba] or root downfalls [rtsa ltung], he must immediately confess them to Bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha. Among the eight great bodhisattvas, Ākāśagarbha is the one who especially cares for the beginning bodhisattvas who have committed any downfalls in their bodhisattva precepts. Therefore, one should offer prostrations and present offerings to him. The *Ākāśa-garbha-sūtra* [nam mkha'i snying po'i mdo] says that a beginning bodhisattva should call out to the Bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha every morning at dawn.

In general, Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha [sa yi snying po] is considered the personification of the Buddha's merit [bsod nams rang gzugs] and he especially cares for those monks and fully ordained monks who have broken or lost their precepts because they were overwhelmed by too many afflictions.

A *mere imitation of a monk* [btsun gzugs] is someone who looks or dresses like a monk [grva pa] but who does not behave like one, rather acting as someone who *enacts all kinds of afflictions* [nyon mongs 'chol nyog tu spyod pa].[152] A real monk [btsun pa][153] is

[152] Dictionary: nyon mongs 'chol nyog tu spyod pa means nyon mongs gang byung mang byung du spyod pa

[153] Dictionary: btsun pa means grva pa or bande. btsun pa has the connotation of clean [gtsang ma], clean in regard to the conduct of body, speech and mind. Whoever observes the precpets of individual liberation, the precepts of the bodhisattvas or the samayas of Secret Mantra is clean in body, speech and mind. Someone who does not observe at least the ten virtuous actions is considered unclean [btsog pa] in body speech and mind.

someone who is peaceful and tame in his conduct of body, speech and mind [sgo gsum gyi kun spyod zhi zhing dul ba] and who has abandoned all negative conduct.

You also call upon Maitreya and all the other great bodhisattvas of the tenth level, asking them to help you. The countless buddhas and bodhisattvas have the aspiration and the compassion to help you, to grant you refuge. They also have the capability to do so. All you need do is call upon them, cry out to them and ask for their help. To cry out in lamentation ['o dod bod pa] means to cry out loudly, "Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions, look upon me, the miserable evildoer. From the depth of my heart I cry out to you in lamentation. Please protect me from my bad karma. Please purify the evil deeds that I have accumulated since beginningless time, from lifetime to lifetime. Look upon me with kindness and compassion, and enable me to purify my evil karma."

Text section 284 / stanza 52:

The *glorious Guhyapati* [dpal gsang ba'i bdag po], the Lord of Secrecy, and Vajrī, the 'one who has a vajra' [rdo rje can], are all epithets of Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje]. Just as the son of an enemy whom I have killed will come after me to take revenge, his mind full of anger and aggression, the henchmen of Yama, the Lord of Death, come after me with minds as hateful *as if I were the red-handed killer of their fathers* [pha bsad kyi lag dmar ltar].

Text section 285 / stanza 52:

The sūtras report that each of the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon will have two assistants. The first assistant is the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje], who will always preserve and protect the complete teachings of the thousand buddhas [sangs rgyas stong gi bka' sdus ba po]. He is able to hear and retain the complete teachings of every buddha in their entirety. The second assistant is the god Brahmā [tshangs pa], who requests each of the thousand buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma. The one thousand buddhas and their two assistants are called the 'one thousand and two' [stong rtsa gnyis].

Furthermore, the sūtras relate that from the moment the buddhas of the three times first developed bodhicitta, attained enlightenment and set the wheel of dharma in motion until they finally entered into nirvāṇa, Vajrapāṇi acted as their bodyguard [sku srung]. When Khenpo Kunpal says Vajrapāṇi is *guarding* or looking out [mel tshe byed pa] for all the buddhas, it means he is personifying the self-protecting power of the buddhas.

Buddhist mythology relates that Vajrapāṇi splits into a hundred pieces the heads of all *demonic ones* [ma rungs ba] who cause any harm to Buddha's body, speech and mind. What this actually means is that Buddha destroys sentient being's wrong concepts [rtog pa ngan pa]. Buddha's power *splits the head* of ego-clinging [bdag dzin gyi mgo 'gem par mdzad pa] into one hundred pieces. The Buddha would never cause any sentient being to be harmed.

Since protective powers are ascribed to Vajrapāṇi, retreatants [mtshams pa] even now begin their retreats by practicing the recitation and meditation on Vajrapāṇi in order to remove all obstacles. When moving into retreat, retreatants set up the 'standard of the kings' [rgyal tho] next to the door outside their retreat hut. In particular, when they enter into a recitation retreat of a wrathful deity, the standard should depict Vajrapani with the 'four great guardian kings' [rgyal chen rigs bzhi] or a flaming Tibetan letter HUNG on a lotus, moon and sun seat. For a recitation retreat of a peaceful deity, the standard should depict a five-pronged vajra on a lotus, moon and sun seat or a picture of the four guardian kings alone.

As human beings we each have a *birth divinity* [lhan skyes kyi lha] and a 'birth demon' [lhan skyes kyi 'dre] who accompany us from the time of birth. The birth divinity is the personification of one's merit [bsod nams kyi rang gzugs kyi lha], and the birth demon is the personification of one's negative deeds [sdig pa'i rang gzugs kyi lha]. Practicing considerable virtue [dge ba] strengthens the birth divinity, while undertaking many negative deeds strengthens the birth demon. Vajrapāṇi protects and follows the buddhas and bodhisattvas like a birth divinity. As all the eight great bodhisattvas are personifications of Buddha's qualities, they remain at all times inseparable from him.

Text section 286 / stanza 52:

Vajrapāṇi's residence on the northern side of Mount Meru is called Aṭakāvatī [lcang lo can]. There he is surrounded by hosts of yakṣas [snod sbyin]. As a yakṣa, he is called Guhyaka, the 'Secretive One' [gsang ba pa]. Since he is Lord of the Yakṣas, he is also called Yakṣa Vajrapāṇi [snod sbyin lag na rdo rje].

According to the extraordinary Secret Mantra, the buddhas empowered [dbang bskur] and authorized [mnga' gsol] Vajrapāṇi as the *personification of the vajra mind of all victors* [rgyal ba thams cad kyi thugs rdo rje'i rang gzugs], as the lord of all inconceivable secrets of their body, speech and mind. As a *symbol of that empowerment* [dbang rtags] he holds a vajra, signifying that he holds all the secret instructions [man ngag] and tantras [rgyud] of body, speech and mind of all the buddhas. Thus, he is the one who holds all teachings of Secret Mantra [gsang sngags kyi chos thams cad bzung mkhan], and he is the 'compiler of all tantras' [rgyud thams cad kyi bka' sdus ba po].

Text section 287 / stanza 52:

A Mahāyāna practitioner should rely on a meditation deity, a yidam [yi dam]. This could be any one of the bodhisattvas, such as the Lords of the Three Families [rigs gsum mgon po]—Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi—or any other male or female buddha or bodhisattva one feels devotion to. A practitioner should receive the empowerment for that meditation deity from a qualified master. Without having received the empowerment, even practicing the recitation and meditation of a particular meditation deity will not bring any results. In addition, one needs detailed instructions on how to meditate on that deity and how to perform the recitation of the particular mantra.

If you practice diligently the meditation and recitation of your yidam deity, it will appear either in person, in a vision or in a dream. Once you have met the deity, it will manifest at the time of death and guide you through the experience of death and the intermediate state, leading you to liberation. This instruction is called 'recollecting the meditation deity' [yi dam rjes su dran pa] and is a crucial instruction within the teachings on bardo, the intermediate state.

One single yidam deity is sufficient [lha gcig chog ma]. Consider this single meditation deity to be the essence of all buddhas and bodhisattvas. Do not think that when you practice Vajrapāṇi as your main yidam you are neglecting Mañjuśrī. Understand that your yidam incorporates all buddhas and bodhisattvas. A meditation in which all buddhas are embodied in one single meditation deity is called the 'tradition that incorporates all jewels' [kun 'dus nor bu lugs]. If a sūtra practitioner prefers a more elaborate practice style, then one may designate Buddha Śākyamuni as the guru practice [bla ma], either Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara or Vajrapāṇi as the yidam practice [yi dam], and Tārā as the ḍākinī practice [mkha' 'gro].

Text section 288 / stanza 53:

Now, go with regret in your heart for refuge to the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Realizing that you were wasting your life when you *ignored* the instructions and *teachings* [bsgo zhing bka' stsal ba las 'das pa] of the buddhas and bodhisattvas to practice virtue and avoid non-virtue, you see the great horrors of the moment of death, the intermediate state and the lower realms in your next life ahead of you, and you take refuge to the buddhas and bodhisattvas with heartfelt conviction. You supplicate the buddhas and bodhisattvas, "Please consider me with your compassion so that I will be able to liberate myself from all the negative deeds that I have committed in this and all former lifetimes." Calling upon the Buddha, the eight great bodhisattvas and the sixteen arhats so that they liberate you from your bad karma is called 'the power of the support' [rten gyi stobs]. The Buddha, bodhisattvas and arhats have promised to help us sentient beings. All we need do is call out to them.

Text sections 289-290:

The power of the applied antidote [gnyen po kun tu spyod pa'i stobs] is the power of actually practicing or relying on an antidote. The chapters on heedfulness [bag yod], introspection [shes bzhin] and patience [bzod pa]—the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra—teach in detail how to apply the antidote to one's negativity.

'Heedfulness' means to be careful about what to do and what to avoid [blang dor gyi gnas la gzab gzab byed pa]. 'Introspection' [shes bzhin] means analyzing oneself, checking one's responses to any given situation. You check to see whether or not your behavior is in accord with dharma. You check to see whether your conduct is noble [bzang po] or reprehensible [ngan pa]. 'Patience' is considered the greatest austerity [dka' thub] for a practitioner.

Stanzas 54-65 teach the antidote to one's wicked deeds in the framework of confession. In this context, how do you actually confess your evil deeds? The method of counteracting negativity and its cause is called the 'power of the applied antidote'. Just as an antidote for sickness is medicine, the antidote for aggression [zhe sdang] is the practice of kindness [byams pa] and so forth.

You need to develop the power of the applied antidote in order to purify your mind from the stains of your negative deeds. You must do this for yourself; no one else can purify your wicked deeds. All your positive and negative deeds are created by yourself. You yourself have committed them, and you yourself need to purify them.

Your mind creates positive and negative intentions, and your body and speech carry them out. Understand that when you undertake purification practices such as confession, prostrations, offerings and so forth, it is mainly your mental attitude that renders such practices beneficial. If you reduce them to mere physical exercises or lip service, they do not work. Body and voice are merely the tools; your mind is the most important factor.

On a gross level, any thought, emotion, word or action deriving from a harmful or negative intention is called a negative deed [sdig pa] or non-virtuous action [mi dge ba]. Any thought, emotion, word or action springing from a beneficial and helpful attitude is called a virtuous action [dge ba].

The practice of the power of the antidote for negative deeds consists of three parts: the preparatory part [sbyor ba], the main part [dngos gzhi] and the concluding part [rjes].

The preparatory part [sbyor ba]: First of all you should repeatedly reflect on karma, the law of cause and effect, and on impermanence. You need to gain conviction and confidence [nges shes] in these. If you lack understanding of the law of cause and effect, you will not understand the consequences of your negative deeds or the need to purify them, and you will not understand why practicing goodness is so important. A heartfelt understanding of karma, the law of cause and effect, is therefore said to be the correct view for a worldly person ['jig rten pa'i yang dag pa'i lta ba]. Someone who has understood the law of cause and effect will naturally [rang shugs] practice goodness and avoid wrong-doing. He will never go to the three lower realms but will proceed from happy state to happy state.

Without a heartfelt understanding of impermanence, you will not appreciate the need to practice confession right away. Only by reflecting on impermanence will you understand the fragile and fleeting nature of your present existence. Having truly understood impermanence, you will no longer waste your time with useless activities but will only practice the dharma.

The main part [dngos gzhi]: You recall all your negative deeds, and develop regret for them. Feeling remorse, you ask for forgiveness. You feel no joy about your wrong-doing but only regret. Bringing all of your negativity out in the open, you acknowledge what you have done, and that it was wrong. You distance yourself from from your former actions. This main part is the actual practice of confession endowed with the four powers.

The concluding part: You dedicate all the merit accumulated in this and all former lifetimes in order to purify your negative deeds. Moreover, you formulate the strong and unshakeable resolve not repeat these negative actions and patterns in the future.

In the preparatory part, practice all virtue with the intention of confessing your wicked deeds. In the main part, earnestly recollect and confess your negativity. Visualize the object of confession, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and confess. Imagine that light rays are emitted by the buddhas and bodhisattvas and purify your wrong-doing like the morning sun evaporates dew. Develop the strong confidence that your negative deeds have been completely purified. In conclusion, dedicate the merit of your practice for the purpose of purifying your negative deeds. In this way apply the preparatory, main and concluding parts of your practice to the elimination of negativity. As this is a Mahāyāna practice, think that you are purifying the wicked deeds of both yourself and all sentient beings.

Text sections 291:

Even if you spent your entire life in retreat and committed only very minor mistakes, such as getting angry at a mouse that ate your retreat provisions, you would still need to confess these tiny misdeeds. Unless you confess them, you will eventually experience their fruition. A mere life of virtue does not automatically purify former negativity, which will still ripen unless confessed.

In the sūtra tradition, you confess to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, bring all your misdeeds out in the open, and pray that they may be purified. The real antidote to negative deeds is, however, the practice of virtue. While recalling your misdeeds you must also practice virtue [sdig pa la dmigs nas dge ba sgrub dgos]. When any practice of virtue is embraced by the preparatory, main and concluding parts of confession practice, as explained above, staying in retreat will purify one's negativities.

This instruction is especially important for beginners, who are not able to practice non-defiling virtue [zag med pa'i dge ba], the recognition of buddha nature. Even those who have glimpses of buddha nature, should still continue to practice by means of defiling virtue [zag bcas kyi dge ba]. 'Defiling virtue' [zag bcas kyi dge ba] is a virtuous deed, such as refraining from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, taking intoxicants and so forth, not embraced by conventional or absolute bodhicitta. 'Non-defiling virtue' [zag med gyi dge ba] is a virtuous deed embraced by absolute bodhicitta [don dam sems bskyed].

In the tantra tradition, you visualize Vajrasattva above your head, and imagine a stream of pure nectar pouring down, washing away all your negativity. While in the sūtra tradition, the antidote to your evil deeds consists of the preparatory part, the main part and the concluding part, in the tantra tradition you apply visualizations [dmigs pa]. In both traditions, after you have completed your confession, you must make the resolve not to repeat your negative actions. Finally, you need to develop the confidence that your evil deeds have been truly purified. At best, you should then rest in the primordially pure essence [ngo bo ye dag].

The famous practitioner Sonam Namgyal [bsod nams rnam rgyal], who attained the rainbow body, had been a great evildoer and tough guy before becoming a dharma practitioner. To purify his negative karma, his teacher, the Fifth Dzogchen Rinpoche, Tubten Chökyi Dorje [thub bstan chos kyi rdo rje],[154] made him repeat the Longchen Nyingthig preliminary practices [sngon 'gro] more than thirty times. In addition, he had him carve a mani stone for every sentient being he had killed. He had to carve the shape of each animal he had killed on the mani stone. In this way, he made his confessions, practicing virtue, while bringing each of his wrongdoings to mind. Later, he received the teachings on 'Cutting Through' [khregs chod] and 'Direct Crossing' [thod rgal] and stayed many years in the mountains in seclusion. In 1952 he achieved the rainbow body ['ja' lus].

Without purifying our negative deeds through confession, even should we attain the level of an arhat, we would still have to experience the fruition of our previous actions. Aṅgulimāla [sor mo phreng ba] was such an arhat who experienced the ripening of his wicked deeds after he had attained arhatship. As long as one's heavy negative deeds have not been purified through confession, the wisdom of the path of seeing [mthong lam gyi ye shes], the first bodhisattva level cannot be attained. As it is said: "When our obscurations are purified, realization will dawn naturally" [sgrib pa dag na rtogs pa ngang gis shar]. Once we have become arhats or bodhisattvas dwelling on the bodhisattva levels, we will no longer even be able to commit wicked deeds.

Text section 292:

Even *virtuous people* [dge ba can], who practice 'defiling virtue' [zag bcas kyi dge ba], i.e., virtue that is not embraced by either conventional or absolute bodhicitta, might still take rebirth in the lower realms. Since your previous negativity might outweigh your virtuous deeds of this life, there is no certainty that the practice of defiling virtue by itself will lead you to rebirth in the higher realms. The causes for rebirth in the lower realms remain in your *mind-stream* [rgyud] even if you practice only virtue in this life. To prevent this from happening, a practitioner must purify his mind-stream through confession.

Especially *on the verge of death* ['chi kha'i mtshams sbyor], you need to be very careful to prevent negative thoughts and emotions from arising in your mind-stream. Your state of mind at the very instant of death determines your next rebirth. Negative thoughts and intentions at that moment sabotage your chances for a good rebirth. Tradition tells the story of a monk who led a virtuous life and became very rich. Very attached to his money, he hid it in the wall of his room and could not let go of this attachment even at the moment of death. It is said that he took rebirth as a tiny insect on the money hidden in the wall.

The karmic force that begins an action is called 'impelling karma' ['phan byed gyi las] and the karmic force that completes an action is called 'completing karma' [rdzogs byed

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gyi las]. Like the monk in the last story, while virtue might dominate your actions as the initial impelling force, their completing force might be negative ['phen byed dge bas 'phangs kyang rdzogs byed sdig pas rdzogs pa].

Another story tells of a virtuous person in ancient India who had accumulated enough merit to be reborn in the god realms. However, as he was very attached to his elephant even at the moment of his death, he took rebirth as the god Indra's elephant in the god realms. One's mental state at the moment of death has a tremendous impact on the next life. Despite the accumulation of considerable virtue, if you stray into a wicked mind state [sdig sems] as you are dying, you will take rebirth in the lower realms. These stories illustrate the great importance of virtuous 'completing karma' at the end of any action and especially at the end of one's life. On the verge of death you need to know where to direct yourself [gang la mtshams sbyor shes pa] and how to lead your mind through the intermediate state, the bardo, into the next life.

Text section 293 / stanza 54:

Stanza 54 uses the example of disease to demonstrate why confession is necessary as an antidote to wicked deeds. When stricken by a common disease you follow the advice of a physician who tells you how to cure your disease. You even willingly undergo hardships such as bloodletting [gtar ba], being burned [bsreg pa] with moksha [me btsa'] or a red-hot iron, or undergoing acupuncture [phug pa] with a golden needle [gser khab] and so on.

You should however be much more concerned about the great terminal disease of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i gcong nas chen po] with which you have been stricken since beginningless time. This disease will certainly lead you to the suffering of the lower realms. This disease of afflictions is infinitely more difficult to heal that any ordinary physical disease.

Only when you heed the advice of the supreme physician, the Buddha, and pay attention to what should be done and what should be avoided, will you escape the three lower realms. No ordinary disease consigns you to the lower realms; only your wicked deeds, your involvement in desire, aversion, ignorance and other afflicitons, does so. Afflictions cause negative deeds and bad karma. Your bad karma leads you to rebirth in the lower realms. The only medicine that will cure you is the precious dharma administered by the Buddha. Thus, understand that the disease of afflictions is infinitely more dangerous than any ordinary disease. Understand as well that the dharma, the method to cure the disease of afflictions, is very difficult to obtain.

Text sections 294 / stanza 55:

In stanza 55 Śāntideva compares afflictions to infectious diseases that lead all people to the lower realms. For instance, if one hundred beings generate anger toward a bodhisattva, a very sensitive and perilous object, all one hundred will take rebirth in the hell realm. Therefore, infection by even a single affliction plants the cause for rebirth in the hell realm.

Disease-stricken people must rely on the advice of a physician. Similarly, sentient beings, infected by afflictions, should follow the advice of the Buddha. The dharma teaches the methods for eradicating the diseases of afflictions and for preventing the consequences of afflictions, the suffering of the lower realms. Buddha's teachings can completely eliminate all forms of suffering, physical as well as mental. Buddha has identified suffering and also the causes of suffering. He has taught the path out of suffering. Even if you searched the entire world, you would not find no method superior to the dharma for curing the disease of afflictions.

Text section 295 / stanza 56

In this regard [de la], meaning in regard to the method that can heal all these diseases of afflictions, follow the advice of the Buddha, the supreme physician. Do not act foolishly like someone stricken by a disease who refuses to follow his doctor's advice. If you follow the advice given by the Buddha and practice the dharma well, then the Buddha lauds you, "Well done, child of noble family" [legs so rigs kyi bu]. But if we fail to practice the dharma, but instead engage in non-virtuous conduct, then, since we are bringing harm upon ourselves, we are extremely ignorant.[155] Thus, we become an object of criticism [smad pa'i gnas][156] of the Buddha, who says, "You will not fare well." Furthermore, if you ignore the advice of the Buddha and commit negative actions, your protective deities [bsrung skyob kyi lha], your birth divinities [lhan cig skyes pa'i lha], will leave you.

Text section 296:

Someone who would use a golden vessel to clean up excrement would be considered stupid. Someone who uses a precious human rebirth to commit wicked deeds must be considered even far more stupid. Such a person is not aware of the difficulties of obtaining a human body nor is he aware of the consequences of wicked deeds. Moreover, such a person is not aware that the precious human body is the perfect vehicle for attaining liberation and omniscience.

Text section 297

The physican Jīvaka-kumāra ['tsho byed gzhon nu], who was considered the greatest physican of his time, was recognized as such three times by the kings of Magadha,

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[155] 'Ignorant' [gti mug] connotes delusion or dullness, an ignorance that is dull and dark. The term *ma rig pa*, which is also translated as 'ignorance', connotes 'not knowing' [ha ma go ba], the 'absence of awareness'.

[156] Khenpo Chöga observes that to translate this phrase with 'object of scorn' or 'worthy of scorn' would be too strong since a buddha harbors no such feelings toward any sentient being. See Minyak Kunzang, page 91: [gti mug can dam pa rnams kyis ches cher smad par bya 'os pa'i gnas su gyur pa]. See also Sazang, page 92: [gti mug can dam pa rnams kyis smad par bya ba'i gnas yin no].

twice by King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po] and once by Ajātaśatru [ma skyes dgra]. As result he became very proud and could not see the truth of the dharma. To teach him humility, Buddha took Jīvaka-kumāra to the Himavant mountains [ri bo gangs ldan],[157] pointed out all the medicinal plants, taught him how to prepare them, and explained which diseases they cured. Since Jīvaka-kumāra knew nothing of this, his pride was humbled.[158]

Buddha Śākyamuni also taught for four years the four tantras of the medical sciences in the celestial realm of the thirty-three [skr. trayastriṃśa], on top of Mount Meru. There, surrounded by four mountains—Mt. Vindhyā [ri bo 'bigs byed] to the south, Mt. Himavant [ri bo gangs can] to the north, Mt. Gandhamādana [ri bo spos ngad ldan] to the east and Mt. Malaya [ri bo ma la ya] to the west—amidst a wonderous forest of medicinal trees, is the city of medicine called Sudarśana [sman gyi grong khyer lta na sdug], where Buddha Śākyamuni manifested as the Medicine Buddha, Buddha Bhaiṣajyaguru [sangs rgyas sman bla], residing in a palace. Bhaiṣajyaguru in turn, emanated the sage Vidyajñāna [drang srong rig pa'i ye shes] and the sage Manasija [drang srong yid las skyes]. In response to sage Manasija's questions, sage Vidyajñāna taught the 'four medicine tantras' [sman gyi rgyud bzhi].[159] The audience consisted of the four-fold retinue: 1) the retinue of gods [lha'i 'khor], 2) the retinue of sages [drang srong gi' khor], 3) the retinue of non-Buddhist divinities [phyi pa'i 'khor] and 4) the retinue of Buddhists [nang pa'i 'khor]. Among the latter was also the great Indian physician Jīvaka-kumāra.

It is generally considered that the collective karma, positive as well as negative, of sentient beings causes various kinds of diseases and their medicinal antidotes to manifest in this world. Only the Buddha in his infinite knowledge, however, can identify the correct antidote for each disease.

Text section 298 / stanza 57:

Being careless about your conduct and continuing to accumulate wicked deeds, you will surely fall into the hell realms in the next life. At this time, when you think about the results of your negativity, you understand why you should quickly purify your mind through confession. If you want to avoid suffering in the lower realms, purify the causes for going there. The causes for a rebirth in the lower realms are your negative mindset [bsam pa ngan pa], your wicked deeds [sdig pa], and your non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba'i las]. Understand that you must overcome the habitual patterns of committing negative deeds. With a sincere belief in karma, the law of cause

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[157] Himalayas [ri bo kha ba can].

[158] See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, chapter 82, pages 463-466; *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 389-390.

[159] The four medicine tantras are: 1) the root tantra [rtsa rgyud], 2) the exegetical tantra [bshad rgyud], 3) the instructional tantra [man ngag rgyud] and 4) the subsequent tantra [phyi ma'i rgyud].

and effect, you will try to the best of your ablility to discontinue your negative deeds and aspire to virtue.

Buddhist cosmology teaches that the hell realms begin with the reviving hell, twenty thousand leagues [dpag tshad] below the surface of Jambudvīpa. The reviving hell [yang sos; saṃjīva] belongs to the eight hot hells [tsha dmal brgyad; skr. aṣṭa-aṣṇa-naraka].[160]

In the individual perception [rang snang] of a person who has accumulated great negativity, there will be a long fall, head first, into a dark abyss ending up in the hell realms. As long as we experience this life as real and solid we will also experience the perceptions of the next life as real and solid. From the ultimate viewpoint, all perceptions are as unreal as dreams. As long as we remain caught up in our dreams, however, we continue to perceive them as real. Once we have arrived at the hell realms, we might have to experience the horrors of that perception for one *intermediate aeon* [bar gyi bskal pa].[161]

At present, we can avoid creating the causes of suffering and therefore should be heedful not to create negative thoughts [bsam pa ngan pa]. Once we have taken rebirth in the hell realms, we experience tremendous suffering and we will not be able to free ourselves from this situation. Therefore, Buddha said that we should understand the nature of suffering and overcome its causes.

> You must understand the truth of suffering,
> Overcome the truth of origination,
> Aim for the truth of cessation,
> And apply the path to your mind.

> sdug bsngal shes par bya
> kun 'byung spong bar bya
> 'gog pa sngon du bzhag dgos
> lam rgyud la brten dgos

Thus, Buddha described the essence of the four noble truths.

Text sections 299 / stanza 58

People are ignorant about time and impermanence, never thinking or reflecting about the impermanent nature of their own lives. When they buy a car they consider how

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160 See BCA Volume One, text section 201. For a detailed description of the different hell realms, their locations and their types of suffering see *Prince Jiṅ-Gim's Textbook*, pages 23-27; *Jewel Ornament*, pages 97-102; *mngon mdzod mchan 'grel (2)*, pages 267-268; *Treasury of Qualities*, pages 71-75; and *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 63-71.

161 See BCA Volume One, text section 38.

long it might last, but they never seriously consider how many years, months, days or minutes they themselves might last. People actually avoid the subject and fool themselves into believing that they still have a certain number of years left, a completely unsubstantiated assumption.

Life is unpredictable, and you should not presume that you have a certain number of years left. You cannot be sure that you will still be alive tomorrow; nor is there even any certainty that you will still be alive tonight. As life is that unpredictable and fragile, do not waste your time with any worldly activity. Sit down to practice dharma right now. Do not *relax your mind* [sems bag phab] in a state of laziness and do not *stay at ease* [bde bar 'dug pa], living an ordinary, worldly life. Live every day as if it could be your last, without wasting precious time in anything other than dharma practice. Death is certain; only the time and circumstance is uncertain.

Text section 300:

Externally, humans as well as non-human can cause harm to a person's life. Internally, a person can be harmed by an imbalance of the body elements. As Nāgārjuna says, life is even more impermanent than a water bubble. Take this thought to heart. On waking in the morning immediately take refuge to the three jewels, and resolve not to waste your day with worldly activities. Be grateful that you have another day to practice. Be aware that this could well be your last day.

Text sections 301-302 / stanza 59:

Nobody, not even the Buddha, can assure a wicked person that he has no reason to fear death and rebirth in the lower realms. If everybody has to die and if all wicked people will take rebirth in the hell realms, who can guarantee that I myself, an old evil doer, will not also go to hell after death? Nobody can. Furthermore, no one can guarantee that I will be liberated from the suffering of the hell realms once I have taken rebirth there. Resolve that the karma of negative deeds surely leads to the hell realms.

A Buddhist practitioner does not so much fear death itself but rather fears lacking sufficient time to practice the dharma before death comes. Teachers encourage their students to practice well in order to prepare for death. The teachings on the uncertainty of death are meant to inspire students to practice rather than to remain petrified in fear of death. With these teachings teachers are trying to make students understand that they should not waste time with worldly activities.

Although we know that we must die we continue to assume longevity. Really take to heart that people die while walking, talking, sitting, eating or sleeping. You could die any moment. Therefore, there is no time to waste. Think, "Death comes now; my time is up. There is nothing left to do but practice." With this attitude you will accomplish the teachings. Otherwise, you will not.

The moment of death puts one's practice to the test. When terminally ill, a real yogin will never complain and might even say, "I am completely fine; only this person who

looks like me seems to be sick." This is the state called *happy to be sick, joyous to die* [na dga' shi skyid bdag po]. When a yogin dies he knows that, once freed from the confines of the body, he will attain complete enlightenment. Therefore, he is joyful to become terminally ill, because he now knows for certain that the time of death is near.

Practice tirelessly until your mind is no longer overpowered by afflictions, until it is purified of all negativity. There is no time for leisure. Apply now the antidote to your former wicked deeds.

Text sections 303-305 / stanza 60:

Habitual tendencies are like rolled up paper. If you try to stretch out a piece of paper that has been rolled up for a while, it will roll itself back up. The habitual tendencies of being accustomed to a negative mindset are similar. In order to overcome these habitual patterns, we must repeatedly meditate on the teachings given in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and thereby transform our negative habits [ngan goms] into positive patterns [bzang goms].

Attachment to the five sense pleasures is never fulfilled and can never be truly satisfied. Passion and desire only increase the more we chase after them. The *five sense pleasures* ['dod pa'i yul lnga] are sight [gzugs], sound [sgra], smell [dri], taste [ro] and touch [reg bya]. We have already enjoyed all of these many times over. The bliss of enjoying sense pleasures lasts only for a moment, vanishing in the second moment. 'Defiling bliss' [zag bcas kyi bde ba] is impermanent and fleeting.

When the objects of the five sense pleasures, the five sense organs [dbang po lnga][162] and our consciousness [rnam shes] all come together, only one second of 'defiling bliss' is experienced before it vanishes on the spot. A second moment of the same bliss cannot be experienced since it has already vanished. One is left with nothing, since nothing of that experience of defiling bliss remains. Defiling bliss lacks any continuity [rgyun yod ma red]. Examining this situation closely we see that the experience of bliss lasts only a mini-second.

When we engage in sense pleasures we try to achieve the illusion of long-lasting enjoyment. In truth, however, a single blissful experience lasts only one mini-second before vanishing. Another mini-second of bliss may be experienced but it too will quickly fade away. Nevertheless, we continue indulging in sense pleasure, always pursuing the next moment of bliss. Each time we experience another moment of bliss it vanishes and we are left with nothing. There is no lasting second moment of bliss.

'Defiling bliss' is experienced only from moment to moment. Since it is impermanent it has the nature of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi rang bzhin]. Defiling bliss does not sustain the dream of eternal bliss but vanishes and leaves us disappointed, saddened and unhappy. The teachings say that each moment of defiling bliss is followed by a

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162 The five sense organs [dbang po lnga] are eyes [mig], ears [rna], nose [sna], tongue [lce], and texture [lus].

moment of suffering, the suffering of being separated from bliss. Therefore, chasing after sense pleasure in search of defiling bliss is utterly pointless [snying po med pa]. Those who constantly run after the enjoyment of sense pleasures try to create as many short moments of defiling bliss as possible. But still they cannot avoid the suffering of being separated from defiling bliss the moment it ends.

Despite the transience of defiling bliss experiences, we spend our entire lives chasing after them. In the search for the bliss of sense pleasure, we commit all kinds of wrong-doing and undergo all sorts of suffering, hardship and trouble. We accumulate considerable bad karma, and we will suffer the consequences of these actions in our next life. We have destroyed both this life and the next chasing after sense pleasures and sense gratification.

By doing so we disregard the advice of our *root guru* [rtsa ba'i bla ma], that teacher who taught us about genuine bodhicitta, who pointed out the wisdom of egolessness to us, and through whom we have recognized buddha nature beyond any doubt. We have also disregarded the advice of the Buddha, who is the guru of the three worlds. The *three worlds* ['jig rten gsum] are: 1) the world of the gods living above the earth [sa bla lha'i 'jig rten], 2) the world of the human beings living on the earth [sa steng ma'i 'jig rten] and 3) the world of the nāgas living below the earth [sa 'og klu'i 'jig rten].

What is the advice of the Buddha and our root guru that we have disregarded? The advice is "Be virtuous! Abstain from a negative mindset and negative deeds!" Since we continue to commit the ten non-virtuous actions, and fail to develop bodhicitta, or to practice the six transcendental perfections, we have disregarded the advice of our root guru and the Buddha. Now, realizing our mistake, we must make the strong resolve to follow their advice.

Text sections 306-307:

We ordinary men have strong cravings for meat, alcohol and women. We will slaughter animals to satisfy our craving for meat. We consume alcohol and commit various misdeeds in the state of intoxication. Pursuing women, we engage in intrigues, deception and fighting. To begin freeing ourselves from the hold that sense pleasures have on us, we are advised to reduce our indulgence in them—to simplify our lives and to maintain discipline with regard to sense pleasures and cravings. A practitioner should not aim to completely eliminate the enjoyment of sense pleasures, which would lead to a state of total sense deprivation, but to cut his attachment and craving while enjoying them. As Tilopa said:

> You are fettered by attachment, not by perception.
> Overcome attachment, Tilopa!
>
> snang bas ma ching zhen pas ching
> zhen pa spong cig ti lo pa

Once free from all attachment, there is no difference for a practitioner whether he lives under a tree, outdoors as a renunciant, or as a king in a palace. A true yogin can enjoy the five sense pleasures without attachment. Since he does not pursue sense pleasure, he would never, even at the cost of his life, commit any non-virtuous action in its pursuit. For a true yogin, the life of a beggar and the life of a king are equal. If he has riches, he will use them to ease the suffering of beings and to make offerings to the three jewels. Unlike us, he is not fettered by sense pleasures.

We, in the process of unwinding from saṃsāra, should completely cut all activities of non-virtuous and negative deeds in the pursuit of sense pleasures. We should at least cut down on our involvement with them. The pursuit of sense pleasures has no end. You can never get enough.

Craving and clinging [sred len] are the real root of saṃsāra. Craving is the motivation, the driving force [kun slong], while clinging is the application [sbyor ba], the actual doing. Their relationship is like that of intent [bsam pa] and action [sbyor ba]. All forms of non-virtuous action [mi dge ba] and negativity [sdig pa] are based on them. Craving and clinging cause us to be attached to happiness and frightened of suffering. They propel us into the play of hope and fear, acceptance and rejection. Craving and clinging are based on delusion [gti mug] and ignorance [ma rig pa]. Deluded and ignorant about buddha nature, about emptiness, one holds on to an identity even though there is no identity. That is called ego-clinging.

Craving and clinging [sred len] are only truly destroyed when the wisdom of egolessness is fully realized. Once free of craving and clinging, we will no longer experience the fruitions of our previously accumulated karma, since there is no experiencer of karma left [las myong mkhan med pa]. When there is no ego-clinging left, we are free from fixations. The root of saṃsāra has been purified ['khor ba'i rtsa ba dag tshar red].

Such a yogin will still use his five sense organs to see, hear, smell, taste and touch, but his 'enjoyment' is no longer called 'enjoyment of the five sense pleasures' ['dod pa'i yon tan lnga la longs spyod pa]. Having realized egolessness, for him 'the sense pleasures arise as an ornamentation' ['dod pa'i yon tan lnga rgyan du 'char ba]. Such enjoyment of the sense pleasures is free from all attachment and thus does not create any further karma.

Text sections 308-309 / stanza 61:

Not only did your former attachment to sense pleasures bring you no happiness, but it also formed the basis for many misdeeds. You might think, "At the time of death my beloved ones and friends will help me." However, when the time to die comes, you will go, naked and alone, with none of your friends and possessions. You cannot even take your own body with you. Your life force [tshe srog] will burst like a water bubble. You will have to face the horrors of death, of the intermediate state, and the next life in the three lower realms all by yourself. Lacking the power of self-determination [rang dbang med par], you will go to an uncertain destination, impelled by your non-virtuous

actions [mi dge ba'i las kyi 'phen pa], which will determine where you will take rebirth within saṃsāra's lower realms.

Text sections 310-312 / stanza 62:

What really hurts you at the time of death is the sum total of all the wicked deeds you committed due to attachment to friends and aversion to enemies. If your non-virtuous actions are the cause of harm, then what is the method for surely freeing yourself from them? Confession and the practice of virtue.

Only when you have the faith of conviction [yid ches kyi dad pa] in the law of karma, in virtue and non-virtue, will you be able to practice the power of regret, the power of the antidote, and the power of resolve. Having faith of conviction in karma is called the 'perfect view of a worldly person' ['jig rten yang dag pa'i lta ba]. A person who is endowed with such faith from the bottom of his heart will naturally abstain from negative deeds and naturally practice virtue. Thus, he is practicing the power of the applied antidote.

Before one can dye the wool of sheep, it must be washed a few times to get the fat and dirt out of it. Only then will the dye be absorbed by the wool. If you try to dye unwashed wool, the wool will not absorb the dye. As in this example, you must first purify your mind of all negative deeds and non-virtuous actions, then the qualities of study, contemplation and meditation will arise. This is another reason for endeavoring to purify negative deeds.

Text sections 313-316 / stanza 63:

All misdeeds [nyes pa] or negative deeds [sdig pa] are grouped into two categories: negative deeds of violating a natural law and negative deeds of breaking established rules.

Negative deeds of violating a natural law [rang bzhin gyi sdig pa][163] are violations of the ten virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], which are natural laws. These are killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, idle chatter, covetousness, harmful intent and wrong views. Regardless of who has committed any of the ten non-virtuous actions, whether or not he has taken the vow to abstain from such actions, he has committed a natural misdeed.

Negative deeds of breaking an established rule [bcas pa'i sdig pa][164] refers to breaking precepts that have been pronounced and established by the Buddha. A practitioner

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[163] Also called 'unspoken misdeeds of violating a natural law' [rang bzhin gyi kha na ma tho ba, skr. prakṛtyāvadya].

[164] Also called 'unspoken misdeeds of breaking an established rule' [bcas pa'i kha na ma tho ba; skr. prajñapty-avadya].

who commits himself to following these established rules and then breaks them, has committed the misdeed of breaking an established rule.

For example, a monk must follow the established rule of not eating after mid-day. If he does so, he breaks a rule that the Buddha established for monks, and creates negative karma. Conversely, if a monk keeps an established rule, he accumulates merit. This is the power of the precept.

If a lay person eats at night, he does not break any established rule and generates no negative karma. He has not taken this particular precept as his training and therefore does not break it by eating at night. While a monk accumulates merit by keeping that precept as his training, a lay person will not accumulate merit if he does not eat at night, as he has not committed to follow this particular precept.

An established rule [bcas khrims] is a rule from the monk's codex, the vinaya, which is observed by monks or lay practitioners who are in possession of these precepts. These are rules of training that the Buddha established in order to support the virtuous lifestyle of practitioners [nyams len pa].

An unspoken misdeed of violating a natural law [rang bzhin gyi kha na ma tho ba] refers to any deed which creates negative karma. This mainly refers to the ten non-virtuous actions such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and the like, which are natural negative deeds, not the rules of trainings established by the Buddha for his followers.

Natural discipline [rang bzhin gyi tshul khrims]: By refraining from the ten non-virtuous actions, one is practicing a discipline which naturally leads to merit. Such practice does not depend on taking precepts although if one embraces this conduct with precepts, it will greatly increase one's merit. This kind of discipline is like the advice, "Don't drink poison. If you drink poison you will get sick." Whoever engages in the ten non-virtuous actions will take rebirth in unhappy states in saṃsāra.

Text section 317 / stanza 63:

Fully ordained monks have to keep 253 precepts. Any monk or fully ordained monk, who is careless about the minor precepts will sooner or later break the major rules and bring great suffering upon himself. The established rules are like a protective bamboo fence planted around a mango grove. If the bamboo fence is cut down, the mango grove will be damaged. Therefore, monks should not take lightly even the minor established rules, since they are designed to protect the major precepts.

At the time of Buddha Kāśyapa ['od srung] the robe of a monk got caught in a big elapattra tree. He became very angry and cut the tree down. As a result of this, he took rebirth as a nāga with the body of a huge serpent several leagues long. On his head grew a great elapattra tree, crushing him with its weight, its roots crawling with

insects which caused him terrible suffering.[165] Thus, as the result of breaking an established rule, the monk had to endure great suffering.

Text section 318 / stanza 63:

We have been ignorant like a deluded child [rmongs pa'i byis pa] in regard to what should be done and what should be avoided [blang dor]. We have fallen under the power of *ignorance* [mi shes pa], vagueness [mi gsal ba] and *foolishness* [gti mug] and have thus committed unspoken misdeeds of violating natural laws [rang bzhin gyi kha na ma tho ba] and negative deeds of breaking established rules [bcas pa'i sdig pa].

Unreported misdeed [kha na ma tho ba] actually means 'a misdeed that had been kept secret', 'a misdeed that was left untold', literally, 'something that has not reached the mouth', 'something impossible to mention' [kha nang la brjod mi rung ba], 'something that cannot be mentioned' [kha thog tu phud mi phod pa] due to embarrassment [ngo tsha] or inauspiciousness [bkra mi shes pa]. It is something that makes the mouth dirty [kha gtsog] when mentioned. Buddhist practitioners, particularly monks, must confess all their misdeeds by admitting them openly and spelling them out. Whatever is left untold and not openly admitted has not been confessed.

Text sections 319-320 / stanza 64

Having thus identified your negative deeds, you confess them in the direct presence of the compassionate protectors, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, whom you mentally visualize [yid kyis mngon sum du 'god nas] as being in the sky in front of you. You offer confession with utter sincerity, your mind filled with deep regret about your mistakes.

Offer prostrations repeatedly to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, touching your forehead to the ground. Say, "I, the fool, have committed all these negative deeds and downfalls." Acknowledging your former misdeeds, say, "Revealing each misdeed, one after the other, I confess without hiding or concealing anything." Confessing like this will relieve you of the burden of former misdeeds and your mind will be purified and joyous.

You must promise to never repeat these deeds again. You must remove all this negativity from your system as if it were poison. Feel deep regret and wish to eliminate your former misdeeds. Confession may be offered in front of a stūpa, a statue of the Buddha, or by simply visualizing the Buddha and the bodhisattvas in front of you.

Deluded beings like ourselves cannot actually see the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Nevertheless, they can perceive us without hindrance due to their wisdom perception [ye shes kyi gzigs pa], which is beyond time and distance. Even if they dwell countless

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165 See *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, page 124.

world systems away [grangs med 'jig rten pha rol nas], they perceive us directly [mngon sum du mkhyen pa].

Text section 321 / stanza 65 first part:

You should feel compassion toward all beings when you remember all the horrible things you have done to them. Feel deep sorrow and regret for your actions. Bring to mind the horrible consequences you have brought upon yourself by causing so much suffering to others. All these deeds will ripen on you. All your negative deeds will come back to you.

Speak directly to the buddhas and bodhisattvas: "Guides, buddhas and bodhisattvas, all these negative deeds that I hold in my mind, these unspoken misdeeds of violating natural and established rules, I acknowledge them to be mistakes [nongs pa].[166] Please accept me, the mistaken one [nyes pa can], the one at fault [nongs pa can], and look kindly upon me with your great compassion."

Text section 322 / stanza 65 second part:

While Minyag Kunzang[167] classifies stanza 65 in its entirety as covering the *power of resolve* [sor chud pa'i stobs], Khenpo Kunpal treats only the last two lines as the power of resolve.[168]

Wicked deeds and non-virtuous actions are called *bad conduct* [spyod pa ngan pa]. Our non-virtuous actions cause our perception of the world to turn from good to bad, from light to darkness. Wicked deeds have no good qualities because they cause suffering to ourselves and other sentient beings. We therefore pledge to abstain from them in the future. This is the power of resolve. We should all practice the ten virtuous actions for our own good and for the good of others.

After offering confession, imagine that infinite multicolored light rays come from the bodies of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, clearing away all your former misdeeds. Generate the confidence that your negative deeds have been purified. At the time of your death you should be free from regrets. Such regret would only lead to a very bad rebirth.

You might ask, "How can I be certain that my negative deeds have been purified?" That you can see from your dreams. Many signs indicating the purification of negative deeds manifest in dreams. These include dreaming of white flowers, being given a flower garland, flying through the sky, washing yourself in an ocean, being honored

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166 dictionary: synonym with nyes pa and nor ba

167 Minyag Kunzang, page ….

168 The power of resolve may also be translated as the 'power of restoration' or the 'power of repair'.

and praised by many people, drinking milk, having a vivid dream of the Buddha or Vajrasattva, and so forth.

Another indication that your misdeeds have been purified is that the qualities of study, contemplation and meditation will become stronger and your mind will become increasingly pure [sems dvangs ma]. As your wisdom-knowledge [shes rab] grows, you come to understand the suffering of saṃsāra. The understanding of impermanence will remain in your mind at all times, and you will have a strong sense of renunciation in your heart. True renunciation arises through wisdom-knowledge alone. Until you really experience the pointlessness of all saṃsāric activities, you will never have true renunciation.

Seeing clearly the suffering of all beings, you will naturally develop compassion for them and wish to liberate them from this endless circle of suffering. Your devotion to the Buddha and your root guru will be unwavering and practicing meditation will become easy and joyful. Renunciation has the nature of rejection and devotion the nature of acceptance. In this way these positive qualities still retain a taint of affliction, and a practitioner needs to know how to overcome these subtle afflictions.

Recite the lines of confession from the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra over and over again since they contain all the necessary knowledge concerning confession. Be aware, however, that the sūtra style of confession will decrease and purify your negative deeds to some extent, but will not utterly eradicate them. Through the tantric meditation on Vajrasattva your confession will bring about greater purification, but only the genuine recognition of buddha nature will utterly eradicate your negative deeds. One moment of genuine recognition purifies countless aeons of negative karma. In order to have a genuine recognition of buddha nature you must first purify misdeeds and obscurations through sūtra and tantra-style confession practices. Without relying on these techniques, you will not be able to recognize your buddha nature since your obscurations are still too strong. Confession creates the conducive conditions for non-conceptual wisdom to arise in your mind.

Text secion 323:

There are two kinds of practitioners: those who hoist the victory banner of the dharma and those who bring down the victory banner of māra. The first type are perfect practitioners who commit no negative deeds whatsoever but practice only virtue. The second type are those practitioners who have accumulated negative deeds but purify them through confessions.

Śāntideva's aim is to teach us how to uncover 'the hidden Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra' we all carry in our minds. When you put these teachings into practice, you will see that they are words of truth. Nothing in this book is removed from human experience. Although the text includes difficult passages, continuous study, contemplation and practice will remove one's doubts and misunderstandings.

You should ask your teachers again and again about the meaning of the text until all your doubts are gone. If you leave certain parts of the text as 'obscure and strange',

these unresolved doubts will eventually harm your virtuous intentions. Many people who begin as ardent and diligent Buddhist practitioners turn to another religion or path after a few years. This results directly from not addressing all doubts and unresolved issues. A serious student must continue asking questions until all his doubts have been clearified. Do not be a superficial practitioner. Tackle the difficult passages of the text right away. Apply the teachings to your daily life.

Text section 324:

The essence of heedfulness [bag yod] is being careful about what should be adopted or avoided. A heedful practitioner is very careful to practice only what is defined as virtue and tries to avoid and overcome all that is considered non-virtue. Those who have not received teachings from a qualified master are ignorant about virtue and non-virtue and therefore are *heedless* [bag med] in their conduct of body, speech and mind. Only the guidance of a master can teach one how to practice virtue and how to avoid non-virtue. Someone who, though formerly heedless, has become heedful in his conduct through the kindness of a master, is considered to be beautiful, like the full moon which has been freed of clouds. Nanda [dga' bo], Aṅgulimāla [sor phreng / sor mo'i phreng ba / sor 'phreng can], Darśaka [mthong ldan][169] and Udayana [bde byed] are examples of famous students of the Buddha who were at first heedless and then became exemplary practitioners.

Nanda was a lustful Śākya youth and a half-brother [gcung] of the Buddha. Though he was ordained by the Buddha, he was so attached to his wife that he thought of her day and night and could not practice virtue. After the Buddha revealed the horrors of the hell realms to him, Nanda became so terrified that he began to meditate and became an arhat. Buddha predicted that Nanda would become foremost among those who control their sense gates [dbang po'i sgo bsdams pa rnams kyi mchog tu lung bstan to].[170]

Ahiṃsaka Aṅgulimāla [mi gdung ba sor phreng can] was the son of a brahmin who served at the court of King Prasenajid [gsal rgyal]. Ahiṃsaka was deceived by a teacher who directed him onto a non-dharmic path, telling him that by killing one thousand human beings and making a garland of fingers he would be practicing the genuine dharma. Aṅgulimāla went to the forest of Kosala, slew travelers and took a finger from each of his victims. He threaded the finger bones and wore them as a garland. Thus he became known as Aṅgulimāla, 'Finger Garland'. When Aṅgulimāla had killed 999 people, he attempted to kill the Buddha as his final victim. Instead the Buddha converted him to the genuine dharma and later ordained him. Eventually, Aṅgulimāla reached the level of an arhat and was praised by the Buddha to be the

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[169] Darśaka [mthong ldan] or Kṣemadarśin [mthong ldan dge ba] is another name of King Ajātaśatru [ma skyes dgra].

[170] See the 11th story of Kalpalatā, page 460; *Heaven Tree*, pages 50-53; *Nāgārjuna's Letter* pages 41-42; *Jewel Ornament* pages 388-392; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 247-255.

foremost among those with sharp faculties [bcom ldan 'das kyis dbang po rnon po rnams kyi mchog ni sor phreng can yin no zhes bsngags so].[171]

Darśaka also known as Ajātaśatru fell under the bad influence of Devadatta [lhas sbyin] and committed many wicked deeds, including killing his father, King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po]. Later, when Ajātaśatru had gained faith in the Buddha, he repented his wrong-doing and was able to escape the karmic ripening of his deeds. He became one of Buddha's foremost faithful lay practitioners [dge bsnyen].[172]

Udayana murdered his own mother because she had prevented him from sleeping with another man's wife. Although he received full monk ordination [dge slong], he was expelled by the saṃgha when the saṃgha learned that he had committed such a crime with immediate retribution. He settled in a border country and erected a temple. A large number of monks eventually took up residence there, and Udayana acted as their elder. Although after his death Udayana was born in hell as the consequence of his crime with immediate retribution, he did not remain there for long. He was again reborn in the god realm and attained the level of a stream-enterer.[173]

Text section 325:

The four sections covered in the second chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are: the section on presenting offerings, the section on paying respect, the section on going for refuge and the section on confessing negative deeds. The primary focus of this chapter is how to confess negativity.

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171 See *Nāgārjuna's Letter* pages 41-42; *Jewel Ornament* pages 381-384; *mdzangs blun* chapter 36, pages 349-382; *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 471-477; *Great Disciples of The Buddha*, pages 317-333; *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 283-284.

172 See *Nāgārjuna's Letter* pages 41-42; *Jewel Ornament* pages 393-396.

173 See *Nāgārjuna's Letter* pages 41-42; *Jewel Ornament* pages 385-387.

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